

DIRECTIONS FOR A GODLY LIFE:

Especially for Communi-
cating at the Lords Table.

*Intended first for private use; now
published for the good of those who de-
sire the safety of their own souls,
and shall be pleased to make
use thereof.*

By

HENRY TOZER Mr. of
Arts, and Fellow of Exeter
Colledge in Oxford.

The sixth Edition.

P S A L. 69. 33.

*Seek yee after God and your soul
shall live.*

O X F O R D.

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DIRECTIONS

FOR

A GODLY LIFE

Especially for Communion

being in the Lord's table.

Intended for private use; now
published for the good of those who
are the objects of their love and
the shall be blessed to make

B.N.C.

10. M. R. Mr. O.

F. MADAN

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TO THE
HONOURABLE
GENTLEMAN

Mr. LORENZO CARY,
Son to the R. Honour-
able Vicount Faulk-
land Lord Deputy
of Ireland.

WORTHY SIR,

Since the time that it first
pleased Your Honourable
Father to commend you unto the
religious government of this
Colledge, wherein you now live,
your carriage hath bin so sweet
and lovely, that it hath wonne, I

The Epistle

dare say, the heart of each member thereof to a readinesse of respecting this your goodnesse, as in word so in deed, according to their severall places and dignities. Neither could I suffer my selfe, standing in a more neare relation than any of the rest unto you, to come short in the performance of this office; Wherefore I here offer unto your religious meditation this ensuing Treatise, collected and composed first for private use, but now published, not to gaine the applause of any (from which my owne unworthinesse sufficiently checks me) but chiefly for these two respects: first to testifie that love, which I both owe unto you and

am

Dedictory.

am ready to make good: Secondly, and more principally, to invite you to a due consideration of those holy duties therein contained, that by a seasonable knowledge of the same, your actions may be the more carefully ordered, and Gods name in the faithfull practise thereof more fully glorified. The subject is a matter not of humane learning, but of Gods service; and thereof a part without exception, the greatest; the due receiving of the holy Communion. A duty, I confesse, better known, then well considered; more often thought on, then sincerely practis'd: if it were not so, bad actions would not be so commonly privileg'd by the

A 3 great-

The Epistle.

greatnesse of the Agents, as
now they are; but they to whom
God hath given most honour
here, would ever think it their
greatest glory to honour him
most againe by their faithfull
service unto him. And good
reason why they should, if they
remember that to whom God
hath given most, of them he re-
quireth most again; yea such
who have the precedency of o-
thers in place and dignity, may
doe well to consider, that, in
making a conscience of matters
of Religion and leading their
lives according to the rules
thereof, they doe not onely pro-
vide well for the salvation of
their own soules, but give a
good occasion to others also,
while they happily provoke
them

Dedicatory.

them to the practise of the same duties by their good examples : which are ever held as lively precepts , and serve for a secret reproofe to an ingenuous inferior , when he shall see himself defective in that , wherein his betters have gone before him. Let the Honourable and Mighty thus remember how far they shall honour God by a religious life , and then they cannot but acknowledge that it is their glorious freedome to be his humble Servants . Others , if they please , may take notice of this perswasion ; and perhaps they would , if I were not unworthy to advise them : but now I speak to you alone , whom I well know willing , as freely to make use of others help , so truly

The Epistle

ly to accept of this from mee. Your own happinesse you must confesse, with thanks to God, that by his providence you live in that Society, whose Religion is as firme as undefiled, where you cannot say, you want the rule either of loving precepts or example; according unto which you have already joyned with the rest in a religious communicating at the Lords Table. My desire is to perswade you to a constant perseverance in what you have so well begun; that so devoting your tender years, with those which follow, unto the service of th' Almighty, you may again from him receive and fully enjoy his daily blessings, which doth ever attend on those that truly seeke him.

Dedictory.

him. *Some Meditations, which perhaps may serve for your direction, I here present unto your view; in which I freely acknowledge almost nothing mine (to prevent the censure of a curious Reader) but onely the labour of composing; this I now commend to you, and you unto the blessed providence of the most Highest, resting ever*

Yours truly



in the Lord.

HENRY TOZER.

17th Decr.

Dear Sir, I have the pleasure to
acknowledge the receipt of your
letter of the 11th inst. in relation
to the bill of exchange of
£1000.00. I have the pleasure
to inform you that the bill
has been duly cashed and the
amount of £1000.00 has been
paid to you. I have the pleasure
to inform you that the bill
has been duly cashed and the
amount of £1000.00 has been
paid to you.

Yours truly

in the Lord.

HENRY T. O'NEILL



DIRECTIONS

F O R

The due receiving of the
Holy Communion.

C H A P. I.

*What a Sacrament is, and
how many there be.*



A Sacrament is
an outward vi-
sible signe of
an inward and
invisible grace:
ordained by God, whereby
he doth seal nnto us his co-
venant

venant of grace made in the
bloud of Christ, and we again
testifie our faith and piety to-
wards him: so that it is both
a signe in respect of the thing
signified, and a seal in respect
of the covenant sealed unto
us. The word Sacrament
doth properly signifie an
oath, whereby Souldiers
bound themselves unto their
Generall; whence it is taken
to signifie that obligation,
whereby wee tye our selves
to the blessed and sweet ser-
vice of Jesus Christ: for here-
by we, as Christs Souldiers,
first binde our selves by pro-
mise of obedience to fight
under the Lords banner a-
gainst the world, the flesh and
the

the Diuel ; Secondly, we put on the cognisance and Armes, the Colours and marke of Christ, by professing our faith in him, that so it may appeare unto the world to whom we doe belong.

Now Sacraments are of two sorts. First, of the Old Testament, which were two. First, Circumcision ; secondly, the Passeover. The first was ordained for a signe of entrance into the Covenant ; the second for an assurance of confirmation of, and continuance in the same : both which are now abolished, and in stead of them wee now have the Sacraments of the New Testament, which are like

likewise two. First, Baptisme
answerable to Circumcision;
secondly, the Lords Supper
to the Passeover: both signi-
fied by that water and bloud,
which issued out of the side
of Christ, when it was pier-
ced by the Souldiers on the
Crosse. Of these the first is
called the Sacrament of our
Nativity or entrance, because
by it we are assured that wee
are received into the Cove-
nant of Grace, and so are re-
generate and belong to the
flock of CHRIST: the second
is called the Sacrament of
our growth & perseverance,
whereby wee grow up in
Christ, and are assured that
wee shall be still kept in this
estate

estate. So that both are necessary; the one to assure us of our entrance into, and the other of our continuance in the estate of Grace; for although that Grace once conferr'd cannot be lost, yet our assurance doth often want strengthening by reason of our manifold temptations, against which we are comforted by the remembrance of Christs death and passion: which doth also teach us why the Sacrament of Baptisme is received but once, and the Lords Supper often; because our birth is signified by our Baptisme, and we can bee borne but once; but wee daily stand in need of foode
and

and strengthening, and therefore wee often receive the Supper of the Lord, that our souls may be nourished unto life everlasting.

CHAP. II.

What the Lords Supper is:

THat we may rightly understand the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, wee must know 2. things. 1. what it is; 2. what belongs to the due receiving of it.

For the first; the Lords Supper is a Sacrament, consisting of Bread and Wine lawfully consecrated and distributed; instituted by Christ him-

himself, for a continuall remembrance of the Death and Passion of Christ, and the benefits which wee receive thereby.

This institution was at Christs last Supper after hee had eaten the Passeover with his Disciples; so that it is called a Supper in respect of the time of the institution; and the Lords Supper in respect of the Author, the Lord Christ: as also in respect of the end thereof, which is partly to set forth the Lords Death, and the spirituall food therein received, namely the body and bloud of Christ himself.

In this Sacrament we must
con-

consider two things. 1. The parts : 2. The end.

The parts are two. First the outward Signes. Secondly, the Things signified. The Signes are either representing, namely, the Elements themselves: or applying signs, which are the actions about those Elements.

The Elements are 2. Bread and Wine : not Bread only, but both ; according to Christs institution: and that afunder, not the Bread dipt in the Wine, as some will have it; because Christs bloud was shed out of his body for our sinne, and wee are to receive these Signes as representing Christ, not whole, but

but wounded and pierced.

Now Christ chose these Elements before any other, because they best serve to set forth Christs Body & Bloud; for as Bread by divers breakings and pressings comes to bee perfect, yea the chiefest food of our bodies, still giving a good relish, when other things doe not, and is also more common to all, than any other. So the body of Christ by many torments was made the chief nourishment of our soules, remaining alwayes most sweet and pleasant, and common to all that can receive him by faith; and as Wine doth cherish and comfort us, satisfie our thirst, purge

purge away many corrupt humours, and maketh us bold and adventurous: so the blood of Christ revives, and glads our drooping soules, satisfieth our spirituall thirst; purgeth us from all our sinnes, & makes us couragious against all feare of our enemy the Divell: Again, as bread is made of many graines into one loaf, and wine of many grapes into one cup: so wee partaking thereof, and of Christ, by faith are made one with him as our head, and also one among our selves as members of his body; thus of the Elements.

The Actions in this Sacrament are of 2. sorts. 1. of the Minister.

Minister. 2. Of the Communicants. The Actions of the Minister are these.

1. Setting apart, and 2. blessing of the Elements, whereby is signified, that Christ Jesus was set apart and sanctified for us, as it is *Joh. 17. 19.* 3. breaking and pouring out, and 4. distributing to the Communicants; whereby is signified that Christs Body was crucified, and his Blood shed, and that the benefites thereof are offered unto us, if we have faith to receive them, as it is *Joh. 3. 15.* *He was lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should have life everlasting.*

The actions of the Communicants

municants are two.

1, Taking.

2, Eating and drinking.

By which is signified that they, which receive benefit by Christ, must receive him by faith applying his merits to their own soules, as *Ioh. 1. 12. As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them which believe on his name.*

Thus of the signes; the thing signified is the Body & Bloud of Christ, with the benefits, which wee receive thereby; namely the strengthening and refreshing of our soules in the remission of our sinnes: and this we receive, not of the Minister (for he gives

gives onely the signs) but of
God himself, apprehending
the same by our faith : for
Christ is not signified in these
signes as in a picture, but ex-
hibited unto us ; being him-
selfe present in the Sacra-
ment, though not corporally
to the Bread and Wine, yet
spiritually to our faith ; for
though *his Body be in Heaven,*
and must there remaine untill
the last day, as it is *Act. 3.2.*
yet we may feed on him spi-
ritually by faith, by applying
his death and passion unto our
sinfull soules : so that there
is one union between Christ
and the Elements, which is
Symbolicall ; and another be-
tween Christ and us, which
is

is spirituall and reall.

The ends of this Sacrament are twofold : 1. In respect of others : 2. In respect of our selves.

In respect of others , to testifie unto them that faith which we professe ; that so they seeing our readinesse herein, may have their hearts also stirred up to such good duties. In respect of our selves it concernes , either what wee have received from , or what wee are to returne to God. In the first respect it serveth.

First for remembrance ; namely , of the death of Christ ; for , as often as we receive this , wee shew the Lords death

dearth till he come, 1 Cor. 11.

26. *For as often as ye shall eat of this bread,*

Secondly, for confirmation unto us; and that, both of our union among our selves; as 1 Cor. 10. 17. *for we being many are one Bread & one Body, for we all partake of one Bread:* as also of our Communion with Christ; for as the Bread and Wine are turned into the substance of our bodies; so we by faith are united unto Christ, and made flesh of his flesh; *for his flesh is meat indeed; and his blood is drink indeed;* Joh. 9. 55. and for this cause it is called the Communion.

In the second respect concerning that which we are to returne unto God, it serves

B

to

to testify our thankfulnesse
to God for his mercy in gi-
ving us his Sonne, and in him
all things; and assuring us
thereof, by this Seal: which
we cannot but doe, when we
consider the torments that
he endured for our sinnes,
which were indeed the very
nayles and speares that pier-
ced him: and for this cause
it is called the Eucharist; be-
cause in it we offer up our
thanks unto God; and so al-
so it may be called a Sacri-
fice, not that we doe there-
in offer up Christ unto God,
(for Christ himself at once
finished this offering of his
Body on the Crosse) but be-
cause we offer up our thank-
full hearts unto God for his
mercy

mercy in Christ, so that it is a sacrifice, not of Christ, but of our thankfulness.

C H A P. III.

*The necessity of receiving the
Lords Supper.*

THAT we may receive this Sacrament as we ought, we must consider 2 things. 1. the Necessity; 2. the right manner of receiving the same.

As for the first, wee must know that it is not a thing indifferent for us to receive, or not to receive at our pleasure, but that we ought to doe it (though not every Sabbath after the custome observed in the Primitive
B 2 Church,

Church, yet without faile, as often as occasion is offered, according to the example of those in the *Acts*, who continued stedfast in breaking of bread, *Act*, 2. 42.

The necessity of which duty vwill further appear, if vve consider these two things. 1, the principal cause, vvhich often keeps us from it; 2. the motives, vvhich may draw us unto it.

First, that which makes us backvvard in the performance of it, is questionless the policy of our Arch-enemy, the Devill; who strives by all means to draw us a vvay, either by a careless neglect of our chiefest good, to feed rather on our owne foolish

foolish imaginations (as hee
did them in the Gospel, who
had rather *see their grounds, or
prove their oxen, than taste of
that Supper* to which they
were invited. *Luke 14. 18,*
19.) or else by a timorous
fearefulnesse of our owne un-
worthinesse to approach un-
to so holy a banquet, as this
is. And truely if wee could
but see that this is his doing,
wee would by all meanes
strive against his temptati-
ons; for, who amongst us
would not endeavour to the
utmost, so farre to resist his
temporall enemy, as that he
should not bee able to hurt
him either in body or in
goods? and shall we be more
carefull for the preservation

of earthly bodies, than of our heavenly soules, which Christ Jesus hath redeemed by his precious blood? God forbid: wee must know that GOD expects more at our hands; and that our soules are never so safe, as when they are in greatest opposition, and doe that which is most displeasing unto our chiefeft enemy, the Devill: for the more we please him, the less we please God, and the nearer we are to him, the farther we are from God.

The motives which may draw us to the performance of this duty, are taken from due consideration of these two things. 1. who it is which inviteth us unto it. 2.

what

what be the consequents of receiving or not receiving.

He which inviteth us, is God himself, whose ordinance it is; and who requires it at our hands as a principall part of his service: and therefore as often as we omit it, we may be sure that we offend him; which he himself testified in threatening to cut off that soul from his people, which should forbear to keepe the passeover, *Numb. 9. 13.* & if so, then doubtlesse the neglect of this Sacrament, wherein Christ is so fully exhibited unto us, is very displeasing unto him; which is also exprest in the parable of the great Supper, *Luke 14. 24.* None of those men, which were
B 4. bidden,

hidden, shall tast of my Supper :
 Why? because they came
 not when they were invited ;
 and if wee refuse to come
 when the Lord calls , who
 knows whether he will give
 us life untill the next invita-
 tion? let us therefore take the
 Lords offer , while it is to-
 day, lest we be cut off before
 the morrow.

The next motive is taken
 from the consequents , and
 that i. of not receiving. If
 wee receive not , we offer a
 twofold injury ; the one to
 Christ , the other , to our-
 selves.

To Christ 2. wayes. 1. in
 contemning his ordinance,
 who commanded his Disci-
 ples to receive it , 1 Cor. 11.

24. and in them us. 2. in neglecting his love towards us; who (as a father on his death-bed) in the right that he was betrayed, bequeathed this seal and pledge of his love unto us, which therefore ought to be right dear unto us, and at no time neglected when it is offered.

Again, if wee receive not, we injure our selves, and that also two waies. 1, in respect of our name and profession; for if we come not when others doe, we expose our selves to the censure of them, shewing that we are at least neglecters, if not contemners of GODS Ordinance, *who will have all to come to it.* Mat. 26. 27. yea that we have not the

B 5

life

life of a Christian in us ; for *whosoever eateth not the flesh of the Son of man , and drinketh not his blood , hath no life in him.* Jo.6.53.2. we injure our selves from the benefits thereof , for the remembrance of Christs death and passion (if duly considered) cannot but be a great comfort unto us which we put from us , as often as wee omit the Lords Supper : and thus much we may assure our selves , that the devill will be ready to take the least occasion to suggest other meditations unto us: and what a miserable thing is it for us to be exercised in our own pleasures , or such like, when others, with whom we are bound to be present
are

are reverently gathered together, to the comfort of their own souls, to feed at the Lords Table? If we say that we are then exercised in other good duties, as reading the Word of God, or such like; we must know that such duties (good in themselves) are not acceptable to God at such times: and who knows, seeing that herein we neglect the Lords ordinance, how farre he will give the divell leave to tempt us, and draw us away, even from those duties also, to wicked imaginations?

2. The Consequents of receiving cannot but invite us to a constant performance of this duty. Now these consequents

sequents respect either God, or our selves. That vvhich respects God, is our duty of thankfulness & praise, vvhich herein vve offer unto him for his mercy: vvhich is very pleasant unto him, and necessary to bee performed of us; because he is gracious, and his mercy endureth for ever towards them that fear him: and how then can vvee but vwith David, have our hearts ready to sing and praise him with the best member that we have? Psal. 108. 1.

That, vvhich respects our selves, is the benefit vvhich vve receive thereby: vvhich is twofold. 1. Generall. 2, more speciall. The Generall benefits, vvhich vve receive by the

the Lords Supper, are chiefly two.

1, A supply of all our wants, which we shall be sure to have if we receive aright: for he, *which eateth the flesh of Christ, shall never hunger: and he, which drinketh his blood, shall never thirst*, as Christ himself hath promised: neither need wee doubt of the truth hereof: for, *he is full of grace and truth, Ioh. 1. 14. and in him dwellerh all fulnes. Col. 1. 19.* and how then can we want any thing, if we possesse him that hath all things?

2, An excellent rule to our whole life: for when wee hereby consider Gods great love unto us, wee cannot (if there by any love or fear of
Cod

God in us) but be carefull to avoyd any thing, which may be displeasing unto him: so that hereby our bodies are made more obedient unto our souls, and our souls unto God.

The speciall benefit, which we receive by the Lords Supper, is in regard of our faith: and this again respects either our selves and others, or else our selves alone.

The first is, a testifying of our faith unto others: for hereby we both shew unto others the faith, which we professe, and also by our example stirre them up to the performance of the same duty: in this respect therefore it is necessary we should often receive. In

In the second respect it is a confirmation and increase of that faith, which we have in us : wherein we are to endeavour by all means to continue, as Saint *Paul* taught the Disciples, *Act. 14. 22.* and beware that we fall not from our stedfastnesse, but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ* : as it is *2 Pet. 3. 18.* whereof wee cannot but be carefull, if wee consider our weaknesse ; for wee are ever subject to Apostasie, and our faith is exceeding weak ; as we may plainly see by our coldnesse in prayer and other good duties, by our fear of death, and by our love of this world : for the strengthening

ning of which, Christ hath
left unto us this Sacrament
as a speciall meanes condu-
cing thereunto: for the Co-
venant which our faith tak-
eth hold of, as it is contain-
ed in the Word of GOD, so
it is sealed unto us by this Sa-
crament: and therefore Christ
calls the cup, *the cup of the*
New Testament, because
it seals unto us the Covenant
of GOD in the New Testa-
ment, accomplished in the
shedding of Christs blood.
Now if a King should in pitie
ty and compassion send a par-
don under his Seale unto a
poor distressed prisoner,
would we not judge that pri-
soner unworthy of the bene-
fit thereof, if he should either
will

villfully refuse it, or carelessly neglect it? questionlesse wee would: yet such is our case before God, vvho, as King of Kings, hath sealed unto us by this Sacrament a full remission of all our sins: if vve therefore shall either willfully contemne, or at our pleasure receive this pledge of his love, vvhat can vve expect at Gods hands, but a just removeall of this his favour from us? Surely if vve joyn the consideration of our ovvn vveaknesse, vvich so much needeth help, vvith the meditation of Gods mercy, vvho so freely giveth it, vve cannot but acknowvledge our ovvn misery, if vve neglect it: vvherefore as vve fear him, and

and tender the good of our own souls, let us be careful in the due performance of this so weighty a businesse. But some are wont to frame these excuses for their absence.

1. The often receiving of this Sacrament may breed a disesteeme thereof; & therefore it is safer sometimes to abstaine. To which I answer, that in matters temporall (as pleasures, and such like) the often use may breed contempt, or at least neglect, as it often doth, but in spirituall things it rather breeds a greater desire, because the more we feel and know the goodnesse of them, the more we seek after them; yet if it

fo

so come to pass, that by often receiving, wee begin to undervalue the worth of it; we must consider, that this neglect ariseth not from the often use of the thing, but from our corrupt nature; for this Exercise is Gods own Ordinance; alwayes attended with his blessing, if rightly received; appointed as a meanes to stirre up, and encrease our zeal and devotion; and therefore it is not likely that it should hinder it. Let not this therefore keep us from the Lords Table; but let us rather come, that it may be a means to encrease our piety.

2. Some will say; I am not

not prepared, and therefore dare not come: but this indeed is no excuse; for wee must know that wee ought to be alwayes prepared, our whole life should be a continual preparation, as to all other good duties, so especially to this; being *ever ready when the Lord shall call*, as our Saviour admonisheth us, *Mat.*

24.44.

3. Others will urge; I am to take a journey, or to be employed in such or such a business; and therefore I cannot come: Well; if this journey or the like, must of necessity be performed, thy excuse is the safer; but if it may be any way avoyded (as oftentimes it may) assure thy self

self, this is to prefer thy own pleasure before that which God commands: a day vwill certainly come; wherein we must give an account for the neglect of the least of Gods Ordinances; and then it will be said of such Pretences, *Who required these things at thy hands?*

4. Some are wont to urge; I am not in charity, by reason of some wrong which hath been offered to me, and therefore I ought not to come. This indeed is an excuse too common: but we must know, that if vve bee not in charity, it is our own fault; for we ought to be in charity, and still to preserve it: and certainly a miserable

ble thing it is, that we should prefer to feed on our own malice rather than to eat of the Lords Supper ; this is to hurt our selves more than wee need , even to wrong our selves because others have wronged us ; we should rather seek all means of reconciliation , that so we may remove those impediments of Piety and Religion , and come the more freely to the Lords Table.

5. Some thus plead for their absence ; I am afraid to approach unto the L O R D S Table by reason of mine infirmities, which are in me, and therefore I had rather sometimes to refrain , lest I come unworthily , which is a very
fear-

ould fearefull thing. It is so in-
ma deed, but we must consider,
f the that our staying away is no
humb comfort unto us in this case,
wee but rather a means to make
our us worse, and to pull down
have Gods judgements upon us:
ra we should rather remember
re the goodnesse of God, that
may inviteth us, promising to re-
ent fresh those that are heavy loa-
and den with their sins, *Mat. 11. 28.*
the not putting us off for our infir-
mities: for if there be a willing
for mind, he accepteth us accor-
d to that which we have, and
D s not according to that which
in we have not, *1 Cor. 8. 12.*
and though we want that perfe-
ne fection, which others have;
ome yet, if we have a true desire
ery to be refreshed by the me-
ear-rites

rites of Christ, and have
sincere heart before God, he
will accept us according
to this. Whensoever therefore
the divell shall tempt thee
draw thee away by the con-
sideration of thy owne infir-
mity, cheere up thy selfe
with the comfort of the blind
man in the Gospel, *Mark* 10
49. *be of good comfort, because
he calleth thee*: say unto thy selfe
Christ Jesus hath invited me
and hath promised to accept
me, if my heart be sincere
humble, and willing: why
then should the consideration
of my infirmities keep me
from it?

9. Others thus reply:
desire to receive, but I am
conscious unto my selfe

for

some crying finnes which I
have committed before
G O D, for which I have not
yet sufficiently repented;
and how then can I partake
of this holy Banquet in
the presence of God? Is it
so? art thou poor, and yet
wilt thou refuse Gold when
it is offered unto thee? who
will then pittie thee for thy
poverty? art thou desperately
sick, and wilt thou not
seek unto the Physician for
means of recovery? who will
then bemoane thee for thy
disease? Behold, Christ Je-
sus is the Physician of thy
soul; as well able to heal it of
all its diseases, as he did the
bodies of those, which came
unto him, of their infirmi-
ties

ties : forsake not then this heavenly Physician; but labour by a serious repentance to discharge thy conscience of those thy finnes, and then come speedily unto him : it is the counsel of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 11. vwho bidderh us to *examine*, and *then eat*, not go avay; first *examine*, then *eat of this Bread, and drink of this Cup* : If thou say, I had rather stay till the next opportunity, that I may have the more time to repent; consider that the longer thou stayest, the more finnes thou vvilt runne into, and then it vvill be so much the harder to repent as thou oughtest : and besides that, howv doest thou knowv, whether God vvill give thee
grace

grace and time to repent then or not? he hath promised indeed to have mercy upon a sinner, at vvhhat time soever he shall repent, but he hath not promised to give him grace to repent vvhhen he vwill: Seek the Lord therefore vvhile he offereth himself unto thee; that thou mayst finde mercy vvhhen thou seekest it.

Lastly, some in a proud manner thus excuse, (or rather justifie) their absence. I doe already sufficiently believe vvhhatsoever is proposed in the Word of God; and therefore vvhhat need have I to receive this Sacrament so often, as a seale to confirme my faith? it doth no vvay conferre grace unto me; and

my faith is so firme, that I
perswade my selfe I need not
a seale to strengthen it so
much as others doe, whose
Faith is weaker; wherefore
I thinke that I may some-
times forbear. But know,
O vain man which thus dispu-
rest with thy G O D, that this
is Gods Ordinance, a princi-
pal part of his service, which
therefore ought diligently
to be performed, though it
did no way profit us, even
because G O D had comman-
ded it: yea, when wee have
done all those things which
are commanded us, we must
say that *we are unprofitable ser-
vants, we have done but that
which was our duty to doe*, Luc.
17. 10. Besides, is thy faith

so

so strong that it needs no further strengthening? dost thou not daily perceive in thee a weaknesse of understanding in matters of Piety and Religion; a frailty in thy memory, and a continuall disorder in thy affections? if not, know thus much, that it is a misery to want, but a greater misery not to be sensible of our wants: and this also know for a certaine truth, that when thou findest in thy self either none, or at leastwise a small desire of hearing Gods Word, and receiving the Sacraments, know, I say, that there is surely some sinne or other in thee not well repented of, which cloyeth thy soul, that it can-

not delight in those spirituall exercises. Let us therefore endeavour to come to the Lords Table as often as wee are invired ; and when we doe come ; let us take heed that we come not for fashion sake , or to please men , or in any opinion of our own merit in this action ; for this is not a celebration , but a prophane- tion of the Lords Ordinance , because herein we serve not God , but our selves ; which is a fearfull thing ; for God is not as man , that hee should bee deceived ; neither seeth hee as man seeth ; for man judgeth onely according to the outward appearance , but God searcheth the very heart and reins ; and will one day as-
cer-

certainly punish the prophane-
ners of his Ordinances, as the
contemners thereof. Where-
fore, as we ought in the first
place to be fully perswaded of
the necessity; so should we in
the second by all means la-
bour to come to the know-
ledge of the right manner of
receiving; which is the next
thing to be considered.

CHAP. IV.

The necessity of preparation.

HE which desires to re-
ceive at the Lords Table
in a right manner, must make
conscience of three duties,
C 4 which

which are necessarily to be performed.

1. A diligent preparation before.

2. A seasonable Meditation in the time of receiving.

3. A religious practise after the same in our lives and conversations.

In the first (as before in the matter of receiving) we must take notice of 2 things. First, The Necessity. Secondly, The right manner of Preparation.

The Necessity will plainly appeare, if we consider these two things.

First, in whose presence it is that we are to receive.

Secondly, the danger which wee bring to our selves by

by not being prepared.

As for the first, we are to sit, and feed in the presence of the Lord himselfe. Now if any, even the best of us, should bee invited by a King to his Princely Table, he would be carefull to present himself (if he reverence his presence) in the best manner that hee could, putting on then especially (if hee have any better than other) his best apparell, and disposing all things in the most decent order, that so hee might be the better accepted: if so; with what fear and reverence should wee then approach unto the Table of this King of kings, when he inviterh us?

C 5 who

who stands there ready, attended with his Angels to behold those, which present themselves; and will soon espy out that man, who shall dare to approach before him, not having on his Wedding garment: and what can such expect, but, with the man in the Gospel, *a casting out into utter darknesse*? Matth. 22. 13. Neither must wee think to deceive the Lord with an hypocritical out-side; for he looketh not to the outward gesture onely, but to the inward part of the soul: it is not so much a clean hand, or currious attire which maketh us accepted of God, as a pure heart and a cleansed soul, adorned with faith and repentance:

tance : we may for a time deceive mortall men, such as our selves : but when the secrets of our hearts shall bee made manifest, then shall our hypocrisie, as well as our negligence, be layd open to our destruction. Let us therefore humble our selves before God, and prepare our selves aright, that we may escape the danger which will otherwise fall upon us ; which is the second thing to be considered in the necessity of preparation. The danger of not being prepared is particularly set forth unto us by considering the offence which we herein commit, and the reward thereof.

If wee come unprepared,
and

and so receive unvwo:thyly,
our offence is no lesse than to
be guilty of the *Body and Blood*
of *Christ*: as *St. Paul* saith,
I Cor. 11. 27. that is, wee
offer speciall disgrace and in-
dignity unto *CHRIST*, in
not receiving him with that
reverence which wee ought:
which offence, as it is in it
selfe very haynous, so it
draws on us a fearfull pu-
nishment: for the Prophet
Jeremiah hath pronounced
him *accursed which doth the*
work of the Lord deceitfully,
Jerem. 48. 10. and if it be so
in other things, which are of
lesse moment, what can wee
expect for the abusing of this
so weighty a matter? The
Apostle setteth down at full
the

the fearfulness hereof ; when
he saith ; 1 Cor. 11. 29. that
*he that eateth and drinketh un-
worthily , eateth and drinketh
his own damnation :* than
which what can be more ter-
rible ? neither is the Scrip-
ture silent in shewing us the
Judgements of G O D upon
such offenders , as wee may
plainly see , both in the Old
Testament , in the suddaine
death of *Uzza*, for rash touch-
ing of the Ark ; and also in
the New , in the *binding hand
and foot for want of the Wed-
ding Garment.* Wherefore let
the danger hereof move us
to a carefull preparation , be-
fore we presume to come
unto the Lords Table. But
some may say : I perswade
my

my selfe, that I can by no means be worthy to receive this Sacrament, and how then can I receive it worthily? it is true, if wee truely consider our own unworthinesse, and the excellency of this Sacrament, wee cannot by any meanes become worthy thereof: but this must be our comfort, that hee is truely worthy, whom God in mercy accepteth as worthy; and so he will us, if we come unto him in humility and reverence. Let us therefore, according to the Apostles rule, first try, & examine our selves, and then eat of this Supper: which that we may the better doe, we ought in the next place to take notice of the right

right manner of preparation.

CHAP. V.

Concerning Examination in generall.

FOR our better performance of the duty of preparation, we must be carefull to set aside a convenient time before the Communion: wherein, laying aside all other impediments, we ought seriously to be exercised in three duties. 1. A diligent examination of our fitnessse and worthinesse to receive. 2. A comfortable premeditation of the benefis, which we are to receive. 3. earnest prayer

prayer unto God for a blessing upon our endeavours, that so wee may bee accepted to receive those benefits.

In our examination wee are to consider ; 1 To whom this duty belongs ; 2 how it is to be performed.

The first we learn from St. Paul, 1 Cor. 11. who biddeth *every man to try and examine himself*: so that we our selves are to examine our selves. Indeed the Ministers of the Word of God, and all such, to whom God hath committed the charge and care of others, ought carefully to try and examine those which belong unto them ; that so they may be more fit: and inferiours ought also willingly to submit them-

themselves unto their tryall:
yea, if it be not offered, to
seek their help when they
doubt of any thing; that so
by their directions they may
the more chearfully goe on.
These are duties which God
requires at the hands of all;
the neglect whereof will one
day, fall heavy upon those,
which shall fail in due perfor-
mance thereof. Yet this is not
sufficient; for we are, for the
most part, full of hypocrisy,
ready to hide our sinnes from
others: yea we are so witty in
iniquity, that we can behave
our selves so smoothly, in re-
spect of the outward shew,
that others shall find no fault
in us at all; though not with-
standing our consciences do all
the while

while accuse us of some sin lurking within us: wherefore wee are commanded also to try and examine every man himself in particular.

This examination must be twofold. First, Generall, Secondly, Particular. In the first wee must examine ourselves in these two things. Whether we be in the number of the faithfull or not which is very needfull to be considered, otherwise wee partake in vaine: for as our bodies can receive no nourishing and strengthening from the food which we daily receive, unless they have some life in them before: so neither can our soules, if they be voyd of the life of grace,

receive

receive any comfort by this
Spiritual food in the Lords
Supper ; which doth conti-
nue and encrease life, where
it findes it : but workes none
where there is none before.
Let us therefore in the first
place diligently try whether
Christ be in us or not ; of
which we shall the more fully
assure our selves, if we can
finde this perswasion in us,
that we (as our forefathers
were) are strangers and pil-
grimes here, Heb. 11. 13. look-
ing for a city (as Abraham
did) which had foundations,
whose builder and maker is God ;
and that we are made free from
the bondage of sinne by the Son
of God, Christ Jesus. Ioh. 8. 36.
and so with David, put our
whole

whole trust, and rely only on his mercy. Psal. 52. 9. 2. We are to make tryal of our readynesse, whether we be willing, and have a desire to partake of the Lords Supper or no. A willing minde God required of those, which offered any thing for the building of the Tabernacle: as it is Exod. 25. 2. and of those, which offered any burnt offerings, Levit. 19. 5. If so in these, which were but shadowes of things to come; much more doth he expect it at our hands, in the performance of this duty, which is the substance it self. Neither yet let us here deceive our selves, thinking that a bare consent and willing minde is sufficient; it is
an

an hungry desire and appetite, as well as a willingnesse, to receive meat offered; yea that especially, which testifieth a good disposition in the stomach: and God requirerh in all his service, (therefore in this also) that we serve him with all our heart and with all our soul. Deut. 10. 12. and blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Mat. 5. 6. For want of this desire it is, that many, when they come to the Lords Table, are never the better; because God, as he inviteth, so hee feedeth none but those that hunger and thirst. Isai. 55. 1. Let us therefore try and examine our selves, whether
we

We can say with David, Psal.
42. 1. Like as the Hart de-
sireth the water brooks, so long-
eth my soul, after thee, O God:
my soul is a thirst for God, yea
even for the living God: when
shall I come to appear before the
presence of God? if we can find
this desire in us, then happy
are we: if not, let us humble
our selves before God, and
beseech him to work and stirre
up in us the good motions of
his Spirit, that so we may at-
tain to some measure of this
thirst; and from that goe on
farther to a particular exami-
nation of our fitness to re-
ceive.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

The Examination of our
Knowledge.

IN our particular Examination, (because wee are dull and ignorant in matters that concerne our Salvation, and also have, and doe often offend both God and our neighbours; all which are hindrances to the due performance of this duty) we must examine our selves in those particulars, which concerne both our information in matters which we should understand; and our reconciliation with those whom wee have offended.

That

That which concernes our information, is a good and wholesome knowledge of those things, which G. O. D. hath revealed unto us; which is so necessary, that it is the very ground of all our service of God; for how can we doe the will of God aright, if we know it not? Surely that the soul bee without knowledge it is not good, saith Solomon. Prov. 9. 2. And therefore God will have all men come to the knowledge of the truth, 1 Tim. 2. 6. without which wee can reape no comfort unto our selves in any thing that we doe; but are as dead men for this (and this onely) is life eternall, that we know God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

John

Job. 17. 3. So that without it there is no life : and hence it is that the Lord himself complaines , *Hos. 4. 6.* *My people are perished for lack of knowledge:* and hence it comes to passe , that many receive this Sacrament without any benefit unto themselves , because they are not able to discern of it aright. We should therefore all our life long carefully exercise our selves in the word of God , that so, when we shall come to examine our selves concerning our knowledge , we may the more easily , and with the greater comfort , try our fitnessse in this respect; whether we have attained to a competent measure of knowledge

in the grounds of Religion
or not. Which that we may
the better doe, we are to
make .tryall of. a twofold
Knowledge, vvhich we ought
to have: The one concerning
God, the other concerning
Man.

- Concerning God, we are
to know, That there is but
one, onely wise and true God,
subsisting in three Persons;
the Father begetting the Son;
the Son begotten of the Fa-
ther; and the Holy Ghost
proceeding from both: vvhich
is a mystery farre exceeding
our understanding; yet so far
are wee to know and believe
it, as God hath revealed it in
his Word: and therefore first
are we to examine our selves

con-

concerning this knowvledge.

Concerning man vve are to knowv, that he was first created in uprightnes, *according to the Image of God.* Gen. 1. 17. but aftervvards fel through disobedience, and was again recovered by the meritorious death of Christ Jesus. This vve are to examine according to the 2 parts of the Word of God, the Law and the Gospel.

In the first we shall plainly see vvhat we are in our selves, even vvretched and miserable sinners, corrupt children of disobedient parents, and that vvee have justly deserved death as a due revvard for our manifold sinnes, both originall and actuall, being

D 2 carnall

carnall, sold under sinne, by nature the Children of wrath, Ephes. 2, 3.

In the second we shall understand that wee are in Christ, and what that covenant is, which God hath made unto man in him for the pardoning of their sinnes which return unto him by repentance, and apply the same unto themselves by faith. So that here we are to know two things: 1. The means of our redemption and reconciliation, the Death of Christ: whom God in love sent into the world, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons, Gal. 4. 5. and so hath delivered us from the power of dark-

darknesse, Colos. 1. 13.

2. The means, whereby we may apply this unto our selves : namely faith : which is a gift of God , begotten and increased by hearing the word , and receiving the Sacrament. Let us therefore seriously examine our selves , whether we have learned out of the Word of God our first innocency , which we had by creation ; our misery , which we fell into by transgression ; and the happinesse , which we have obtained again by our sweet and blessed redemption : for in those things ought every one to be instructed , which approacheth unto the Lords Table.

Besides this Knowledge

D 3

of

of God and man, vve are further to have a particular knowvledge of the Sacrament it self: vvhether vve are to try, vvhether vve doe rightly discern the Elements from the Lords Body, and the true use of them: vvherein we must consider, that the Bread and Wine (in themselves ordinary) being ordained of Christ, are novv become holy, and vvhereas Christ blessed this Sacrament at the first institution, vvee are to knowv that it is a blessed Sacrament: because, vvhatsoeuer he blesseth, is blessed, and that it vwill be a meanes of great blessing unto us, if rightly received; and vvhereas Christ gave the same after Supper,

Supper, vve must further knowv, that it vvas not ordained to satisfie our bodily hunger; for, if *any man* thus hunger, Saint *Paul* tells him that hee must *eat at home*. 1. *Corinth.* 11.34. but it vvas given for the refreshing of our vwearied Soules by the commemoration of Christs death for us, and of our communion vvith him: but of this particular Knowvledge of the Sacrament, more in the beginning of the first Chapter. In this, as in the former, vvee must diligently try and examine our selves, for, except vvee knowv all these things, vve are not to partake at the Lords Table: because vvithout it, vvhatsoever vve doe,

is but blinde devotion.

CHAP. VII.

The Examination of our repentance.

THus of our information
in matters which we
ought to know. As for our
reconciliation, we are to ex-
amine our selves in those
things which concerne either
God or our Neighbours; be-
cause we have and doe often
offend both.

Those which concerne
God are principally two. 1.
Repentance; whereby we re-
flect our hearty sorrow for
offending him; with a desire
of amendment. 2. Faith;
where-

whereby we take hold on his mercy, for the pardon and forgiveness of them.

First, we are to try whether we have attained to a competent measure of Repentance. And indeed, if we truly look into our selves, and consider that wee must one day give an account for every idle word, we shall finde matter enough for Repentance, if our hearts be not hardened in sinne. Now, that it is necessary to examine our selves herein, appears from this, because without it we have no ground at all for any comfort in Christ Jesus; for he, which is full with his finnes, is no more fit to receive Christ, than a gluttoned

D. 5 stomach

stomake it's meat : and again, unto them that are defiled, there is nothing pure. Tit. 1. 15. that is, it through unbelief, they remain in their pollutions ; but unto the pure all things are pure ; and if we cleanse our hands and purify our hearts , and so draw nigh unto God, he will draw nigh unto us. Jam. 4. 8. as many as walk according to this rule, peace be upon them. Gal. 6. 16. Let us then search and try our waies , and turn unto the Lord. Lament. 3. 40. and put on Davids resolution before wee come to the Lords Table ; I will wash my hands in innocency, O Lord, and so will I go to thy Altar. Psal. 26. 6. In this examination of our Repen-
tance

tance, we must have respect both unto the time past and to come.

In respect of the time past vve are to performe three duties.

I. Carefully search our hearts to finde out our owne corruptions ; that knowving them, vve may the better avoyd them, which is most necessary to be done, and that in the first place ; because it is impossible that hee should seeke to goe into the right vway, vvhich doth not first see his errour ; and thus much vve must know, that hee that will not set his finnes before him here to his conversion, shall have them set before him hereafter to his confusion,

on, if we will needs cover and hide finnes, let us in love and charity cover the finnes of others; for *Love covereth a multitude of sinne*, 1 *Pet.* 4. 8. that is, layeth them not open before men to their disgrace, who have committed them; as many doe, who delight to heare other mens faults ript up to the quicke, but cannot endure to heare of their o^{wn}: we should not so much exclaime against other mens finnes, but rather be humbled for our o^{wn}, and lay them fully open before our selves, that so we may come to a more serious repentance for them. Which I thinke, we cannot but doe (except we have more than stony

stony hearts) then we consider the torments which Christ suffered for our sinnes; and see our own misery, what we are in our selves: for this must needs drive us unto God, as a desperate disease unto the Physitian; and make us utterly to accuse our selves and say, *Psal. 51. 3. I acknowledge my fault, and my sin is ever before me.*

Now the chiefest meanes, which we can use to come to the knowledge of our sinnes, are these two. 1. A continual meditation in the Word of God, wherein (as in a glasse) we shall plainly see all our deformities. 2. A reasonable conference and conversation with such as are themselves

themselves touched with their
finnes, both vvhich are excel-
lent meanes: and therefore
vve ought sincerely to love
the Word of God, because it
doth discover our sinnes un-
to us; and diligently read, and
exercise our selves in it, that
so vvee may come to a full
knowledge of it; and also
heartily affect and love those
vvhom vve see to be thus af-
fected. When vve have thus
considered, that vve ought
and how vve may discover
our sinnes; let us examine
our selves vvhether vvee have
thus done in our life past or
no, giving thanks to G O D
that he hath at any time dis-
covered such or such sinnes
unto us: if vve finde that we
have

have not thus done (as God knowvs ; vve are all too slack herein) let us seasonably repent us of this neglect ; and bee sorry that vvee have no sooner repented ; desiring God that he vwill be pleased ever more and more to discover our sinnes unto us, that so vve may the better forsake them, and serve him, as vve ought. Having thus unfolded our sins before our eyes , let us in the second place examine, howv in sorrow vve have humbled our selves to God for them ; for this is that, even our sorrow, vvhich must move God to compassion ; and vve knowv that God is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart , and will save such

such as be of an humble spirit.
Psal 34. 18. And therefore
David being pressed down
with the burden of his finnes,
comforted himselfe in this
saying: *The Sacrifice of God is*
a troubled spirit, a broken and a
contrite heart, O God shalt thou
not despise, Ps. 51. 17. Where-
as on the contrary, if we have
no true sorrow, if our soules
be not wounded within us
for our finnes, we cannot ex-
pect that either we or our
prayers should be accepted
of God; or, that we shall with
the Sacrament receive any
comfort to our soules, if we
come not to it with sorrow
for our former transgres-
sions.

Now there is a twofold
sorrow:

sorrow : 1. Servile ; when we are sorry for our finnes (as some servants are , when they have offended their Masters) not because we have sinned against such a Master , but because we have thereby made our selves subject to the punishment due unto our offence : this is not that sorrow , which God expecteth of us : for it rather driveth us to despair , than to any pious meditations. 2. Filiall : when (like naturall children) we grieve for our finnes , not so much in respect of the punishment due unto us , as that wee have sinned against so mercifull and loving a Father. This is that true sorrow , with which we ought to

to bee affected: which we may obtaine two wayes. First, by our selves. Secondly, by the help of others also.

By our selves, and so by the consideration especially of two things: First, vvhom it is that wee have offended: even God himselfe, vvhom render mercy towards us, gave his onely begotten Son to dye for our sins. The consideration of vvhich cannot but worke in us a true sorrow, that wee should offend so mercifull a God: for what sonne is there (if he have in him the affection of a sonne) but vvhould grieve that hee should offend a Father, vvhich hath been ever loving and

and kind unto him?

2. The grievousness of our finnes vvhich vve have committed; vvhich vwill plainly appeare, if vvee consider them either in respect of our selves, how deadly they vround the conscience; or vvith reference to others, how infectious they have been to them, vvhom vve have often dravvn into the same faults, vvhich vve our selves have committed; and so have made them guilty of our sins, and our selves of theirs.

The next meanes to attain this sorrow, is the help of other men, vvho are themselves touched vvith a feeling in this kinde; vvith vvhom vvee ought to accompany our selves,

selves, and patiently to accept of their admonitions ; still accounting them our truest friends , which most faithfully and roundly put us in mind of our faults. The hypocrite may esteeme such as desire thus to expresse their love, busie bodies, or the like ; but *Dauids* wish was , that the *righteous might smite him friendly and reprove him*, *Psal.* 141. 5. and whosoever is a sound hearted Christian will ever strive to make the best use of such, as he can. Let us therefore examine our selves, whether we have made good use of those meanes or not : if we have not , wee ought to humble our selves before God for this neglect also ; earnestly

earnestly beseeching him,
that he will worke in us true
sorrow for our sinnes past,
with a desire of amendment.
Whereunto, that we may the
better move him, we are in
the next place to lay open and
confesse our sinnes unto God;
which is the third thing re-
quired in our Repentance.
Confession is so necessary,
that without it we can expect
no pardon at Gods hands,
but rather some judgement
or other; and therefore So-
lomon saith. *He, that cove-*
reth his sinnes shall not prosper,
but who so confesseth & forsak-
eth them shall have mercy: and
Saint John perswadeth us
hereunto by the mercies of
God, saying: *If we confesse our*
sinnes,

times, he is faithfull and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousnes. Joh. 1. 1, 9.

Now in our confession vve are to observe especially three things. First vvhath vve are to confesse. Secondly to vvhom. Thirdly how.

As for the first, there is a twofold confession. 1. *Laudis*, or of Thankfulness; of vvhich David speaks, *Psal. 89. 1 With my mouth will I ever be shewing thy truth; yea every day will I give thanks to thee and praise thy name. Psal. 145. 2.* Which vve are also daily to practise according to his example: but this is not that confession vvhich is so properly meant here in the matter of penitance

tance. There is therefore another, called *Confessio fraudis*, a confession of sinne, and this we are to make, if vve vwill truly repent: vvhich ought to be, not of some sinnes onely, but of all as farre as vve can call them to minde; and especially of those beloved and bosome sinnes to vvhich we are most addicted; vvhich that vvee may the better doe, we ought daily to renevv the memory of them in our selves; that so vve may be the better able faithfully to confesse the same, as often as occasion requires.

2. We are to confess our sinnes, not unto men or Angels, but unto God, vvhich is the supream Judge of all. There

There is indeed a time wherein we may make confession, before men; either in publike, before a whole congregation by way of penance, being by the Church thereunto commanded; or else in private; and that, either, for satisfaction, to our Neighbour, whom we have wronged; or for consolation, to the Minister, when our consciences are troubled. But that confession, which is a part of our Repentance for our finnes past against God, and wherein we desire full pardon for the same, we are to make to God alone: for he it is, who is offended, and he alone, that can forgive our finnes.

3. Our confession must not

not be of the heart onely, but of the mouth also ; for God who made both , expecteth to be honoured by both ; and as both have been uncleane before him ; so they ought both also to acknowledge the same, that he may cleanse and purifie both them , and with them the whole man.

Again our confession must proceed from a two-fold ground. 1. Hatred of sinne , because by it wee dishonour God. 2. Hope of mercy. which is that we ayme at in our confession ; and it must further be qualified with sincerity , with shame and sorrow that we have offended so gracious a God , lest God reject us as hypocriticall. Let

E

us

us therefore henceforth leave off censuring the faults of other men, and beginne to aggravate our ovvn; and especially before vve presume to come to the Supper of the Lord: Let us take some time unto our selves vwherein vve may be most private; and shut our selves up in our Closets, and there humbly on our knees lay open before God those sins, vvhich vve have committed in our life past: & that fully and faithfully; neither diminishing the number of them, nor mincing the haynousnesse of them, for God vvill not bee moked. These are things, vvhich vvee are to performe in respect of the time past: as for the time

to come, vve must know, that he vvhich will truely repent, must not onely turne from Evill, but also turne unto good; and therefore, having confessed our sins past vvith sorrow for them, vve must (if vve expect pardon) constantly purpose for ever after, by Gods grace, to amend and reforme our lives; resolving (as much as in uslieth) to avoid all occasions, vvhich may dravv us into the like finnes againe, and to make better use of those meanes vvhich God hath afforded us, than vve have done heretofore; and that by so much the more, by how much vvee have offended so gracious a Father. But of this resoluti-

on of amendment, more in
the 12. Chapter.

C H A P. VIII.

*The Examination of
our Faith.*

THe Examination of our
Faith, is that whereunto
S. Paul exhorteth the *Corin-
thians*, saying, *examine your
selves, whether you be in the
Faith or not*, 2 Cor. 13. 5. The
necessity whereof appeareth
even from this, that *without
Faith we cannot please God in
any thing we doe*, Heb. 11. 26.
much lesse in this weightry
businesse: yea Faith is so ne-
cessary, that without it wee
dee receive nothing at all,
when

when we doe receive ; for although with our bodily hands we receive the Bread and Wine ; yet if we have not Faith , we want a hand to receive the Body and Bloud of Christ, and the comfort which thence ariseth unto our souls : for how can we be perswaded in our consciences , that our receiving is acceptable unto God , and that the merits of Christ Jesus belong unto us without Faith ? It is impossible that wee should receive any more comfort than what we believe ; and therefore our Saviour Christ saith , *He that believeth on me, shall never thirst , Job. 6: 35.* Therein implying , that he which doth not believe in
E 3 him,

him, shall ever thirst : yea, vvhich is fearfull, *hee which beleeveth not, shall be damned, Mar. 16. 16.*

Nowv that Faith vvhich is here required of us, must not bee onely a generall faith, vvhereby we believe that the Word of God is true, & that God is a just Judge; (for this the Divells themselves believe and tremble at it; and vvell they may, considering vvhath is due to them, eternall condemnation) but vve must goe on further to a more speciall kind of Faith, & (vvhich they cannot doe) apply the merits of Christ, and the promises of God made therein, unto our Souls and Consciences; saying vvvith *Job c hap.*

chap. 19. vers. 25. *I know that my Redeemer liveth* : I knowv, by the knowvledge of Faith, or I believe ; and not onely the Redeemer of Man , but My Redeemer liveth.

Of vvhich that vve may the more fully persvade our selves, vve must believe; first, concerning our selves , that vve are not able of our selves to doe any thing that is acceptable and pleasing in the sight of God ; *for we have nothing but what we have received of God* , as S. Paul testifieth, vvhether good gift , or ability of doing good.

2. Concerning the meanes of our Salvation , vves must believe , that the merits of Christs Death and Passion,

are alone sufficient for our Redemption, without any merits at all, or satisfaction of ours.

3. Concerning God, we ought to believe, that if we truly repent us of our life past, constantly purposing to lead a new life hereafter, and sincerely use those good means, which he shall afford us, he will then be mercifull unto us in accepting our in-deavours, through the merits of Christ Jesus.

4. Concerning the Sacrament, we ought to believe; that it is a means, ordained of God, to exhibite unto us Christ Jesus with his merits and a seale to confirme our Faith. If, upon considerati-
on

on of these particulars , we can be thus perswaded of our owne insufficiency and unworthinesse, and that yet notwithstanding upon our sincere humiliation and obedience , God will be mercifull unto us ; if we cannot onely say in generall that God is a mercifull Father , and that Christ died for the redemption of Man ; but every one of us in particular thus apply unto himself : I believe that God is my mercifull Father, and Christ Jesus died to redeeme me as well as any other , all which I shall have plainly confirmed unto mee in the receiving of this Sacrament, wherein , (I trust) God will in mercy accept me

for Christs merics ; though of my self I be unvvorthy: If (I say) vve can finde that vve are not hypocritically , but sincerely, not verbally, but heartily , thus persvaded ; then may vvee , having thus made peace vvith God by our Faith and Repentance , boldly approach unto the Lords Table.

CHAP. IX.
*The Examination of
our Charity.*

HAving examined our selves in those former duties tovwards God , vve are to goe on to another duty , vvich concerneth our neighbour :

bour; namely, charity: vvhich is a free forgiving of those that have offended us, with a testification of the same, when occasion is offered: and a reconciliation of our selves to those, whom wee also our selves have wronged.

That we may be the better perswaded unto a due performance of this duty, we are to observe two things.

1. The motives thereunto.

2. The manner how it ought to be done.

The motives, which invite us to the necessity of it, are drawn from the consideration of these four things.

1. What we our selves have done unto others.

2. What

2. What harme we doe unto our selves by not being in charity.

3. What they are , with whom we are offended.

4. Whence such wrongs, as we receive , doe primarily come.

As for the first , we are conscious unto our selves of a twofold offence , which we have committed.

1. Against other men ; whom perhaps wee have at some time or other more wronged , then they us , or at least our consciences can tell us , that we have been prone and ready thereunto , had we not been prevented : and how can he , which hath beene forward to wrong others,

others, make the most of every wrong offered by others unto himself? We must here take notice of the advise of *Salomon* in another case. *Seek not*, saith he., *to have thy servant curse thee: for oftentimes thy heart knoweth, that thou thy self hast also cursed others*, *Eccles. 7. 22.* So also be not hasty to aggravate the wrong which others have done unto thee; for thy heart can tell thee, that thou thy self hast also wronged others.

2. If this consideration prevaile not with us; let us consider in the next place, that we have daily offended God farre more than any man can offend us: and can any

any of us expect any mercy from God in the forgiveness of our debts, if vve shew none to others in passing by small matters of offence? Small, I say, because the greatest are small in respect of the offences vvhich vve have committed against God. Our Saviour Christ told his Disciples plainly (and in them us) *Mar. 11. 25. If ye doe not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses:* vvhich vvas verified in the Parable of the cruell servant; vvho (because he had no compassion on his fellowv-servant, as his Iord had pittie on him) vvas delivered to the tormentors, till he should pay all that

was

was due; yvith this application annexed, so likewise shall my heavenly Father doe also unto you, if ye from your hearts, forgive not every one his brother their trespasses, Mat. 18. 34, 35. The consideration vvhercof I think, is able to move any good-hearted Christian to love his brethren, though they have offended him.

The second motive unto this duty is taken from the consideration of the harme, that othervvise vve bring upon our ovvn Souls; vvhich indeed is greater, than either vve can doe unto others, or they unto us.

This harme is twvofold; 1 Generall; namely, a stain to all the good vvhich vve have

have: for though wee speake with the tongue of Men and Angels: though wee have all other good gifts, as of Prophe-sying, understanding of myste-ries, &c, yet, if wee have not Charity, we are nothing, 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2. Let us not there-fore boast of our learning and other good parts, as long as we are without Charity; for all is nothing; *no more than a sounding brasse or a tinkling Cymball.*

2. Particular: and so it is an hinderance, 1, To our Prayers; 2, to the right recei-ving of the Sacrament. The want of Charity is an hinde-rance to our Prayers in a two-fold respect.

1, Because, without Cha-
rity

rity, we cannot expect to receive that which wee pray for; for if we pray to God to forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us, how shall we hope that God will forgive us, if we forgive not others, which is the condition of our Prayers? To pray for the one, and not to performe the other, is to mock God in our Prayers; or rather, miserably to deceive our selves: for as many have not because they ask not, *so many work and receive not, because they ask amisse: Jam. 4. 3.* and such are they which aske without charity; and who knowes how soone they may stand in need of Gods mercy?

2. It

2 , It hinders our Prayers in this respect; because vvithout Charity , we cannot joyn those , vvith vvhom vve are at variance , vvith our selves in our Prayers : vvhich is against the rule of our Saviour Christ , who biddeth us to pray ; *Our Father*, and *give us our Bread* ; and so joyn others vvith our selves in every Petition : novv hovv can vve heartily pray thus for them , vvhom vve love not ? our ovvne consciences can sufficiently tell us , that vve cannot ; yea , and that vve often have been faulty herein. Wherefore , if vve desire that our Prayers should hence forth be effectuell , let us follow the counsell , vvhich S.

Peter

Peter giveth to the Husband and Wife, 1 Pet. 3. 7. Which is, to live together according to knowledge, bearing one with another, that our prayers be not hindered: vvhich if vve doe, our Prayers shall be much furthered, as Christ himself saith: If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching the thing that they shall aske, it shall bee done for them of my Father which is in Heaven: Mat. 18. 19.

The want of Charity is an hinderance to our due receiving of the Sacrament: because the Sacrament is a Seal of our union and communion, as vvith Christ, so amongst our selves; as Saint Paul saith: 1 Cor. 10. 16, 17.

The

The cup of blessing which we blesse, is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ? For we, being many, are one Bread and one Body, because we partake of one Bread.

So that, unlesse we be joyned together in love, we cannot be capable of those benefits, which otherwise would arise unto our Souls.

Again, love is the very badge whereby wee are knowne to be Christs Disciples, *Joh. 13. 35.* By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another. It is a part of that wedding-garment, where-with every one ought to bee cloathed, that

that comes to the Lords Table. Wherefore, if we desire to be accepted when we doe come, and there to receive the benefits of Christs Death and Passion, let us put on the bowels of mercy and compassion.

A third Motive unto this duty is taken from the consideration of the parties, with whom we are offended: they are Men, yea Christians as well as our selves; such for whom Christ died as well as for us. Shall we then think it hard to suffer some small wrong at their hands, for whom Christ thought it not too much to die? can we perswade our selves, that there is the love of God in us, if we

vve hate them vyhom he so loved? *every one, which loveth him that begate, loveth him also that is begotten of him,* 1 Ioh. 5. 1. and vvhosoever loveth him that did redeeme, loveth him also that is redeemed by him.

The fourth Motive unto this duty of Charity is taken from a serious consideration of the first originall, vvhen these vvongs proceed, which vve receive.

And here vve may take notice both of the Author, and also of the Disposer thereof. The first Author is not so much the party from vvhom vve receive the wrong; as the grand-enemy of both us and them, the Divell, vvho vvell
knowv-

knowverth, that *a house divided*
against it selfe cannot stand:
and therefore striveth by all
means to set us at variance
among our selves ; though
sometimes upon small occa-
sions ; that so thereby hinde-
ring us from the performance
of good duties (as the recei-
ving of the Sacrament , and
such like) which are the
means of our Salvation , hee
may the more easily tempt
us to vvorse imployments ,
while others are better exer-
cised ; and so make his side
the stronger against us : and
vvhoe knowvs vvhath povver it
may please God to give him
against us at such times ?
Wherefore , as we love our
ovvn safety , let us seeke to
crosse

crosse him, who thus opposeth us by his temptations: & if we will needs be at strife, let it be with him, who will never be at quiet with us, untill he have gotten the upper hand of us: which wee may the more easily perswade our selves unto; if we have respect not so much to other mens wrongfull actions, as to his wicked suggestions, the cause of all; and assure our selves, that, in putting up a wrong, we right our selves, and crosse him; which should be our chiefe ayme.

Againe, as the Divell is the Authour of our wrongs: so God, who is the Disposer of all things, hath a hand in
its

it: who permitteth the De-
vill thus farre to provoke us:
perhaps for the tryall of our
constancy and patience, or for
some other ends best known
unto himself: and, if wee
could but see, that the finger
of God is in our Crosses, we
would patiently answer
with David, Psalm 39. 10.
*I will become dumb, and open
not my mouth, because it is thy
doing; and so commit our cause
to him, that he might make our
righteousnesse clear, Psal. 37.
6.*

These are the chiefest Mo-
tives to perswade us to this
duty of Love and Charity;
to all which wee may adde a-
nother, taken from the excee-
ding love of God to us; *who*
F so

so loved us, without any love received first from us, that he sent his sonne to be a propitiation for our sinnes, 1 Joh. 4. 10. Whence the Apostle gathereth this powerfull consequence: If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another, verse 11. Which that wee may the better doe, let us in the next place see the manner how it ought to bee performed.

Here we are to have respect both to the time past, and also to come.

As for the time past, either we have wronged others, or they us. If we have wronged others, we ought to performe two things.

1. Undoe that which wee have

have done, by making restitution as far as in us lyes: according to the example of *Zachens*, *Luke 19.8.* who was willing to restore fourfold whatsoever he had taken from any man by false accusation: such ought we to be, ready to make good whatsoever we have taken from any man, and to give satisfaction for any wrong that we have done. Neither is it sufficient to bee willing thus to make satisfaction, vhen we are moved thereunto; but wee must also in the second place, seek peace with those whom we have wronged, though we be not ask'd: which is the counsel of Christ himself. *Mat. 5.23, 24.* *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there*

remembrest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave thy gift before the Altar, and goe thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother: he saith not, stay till he come to thee; to be reconciled when he cometh: but goe thou to him. And so David also adviseth us, Psalm 34. 14. *Seek peace and ensue it*: stay not till it be offered to, or required of thee; but seek it. But perhaps those (whom wee have offended) are farre off, and we cannot come neare them; or near, and will not be reconciled to us, what shall we doe in this case? Here wee ougth to use all meanes that we can, for the procuring of peace and quietnesse: but if
either

either occasion or acceptance be denyed us, we must not doubt but that God will be pleased to accept of our desire.

Now, if others have wronged us, wee must (though perhaps it may seem somewhat hard) freely forgive them; loving even them that hate us, whereunto our Saviour Christ admonisheth us in every Gospel; saying, *If thy brother trespass against thee seven times a day, thou shalt forgive him*, Luke 17. 4. And again, *I say unto you, love your enemies; blesse them that curse you*, Mat. 5. 44. But some one may say, such an one hath wronged mee so much, that flesh and blood cannot take,

it. It is true, if thou consult with flesh and bloud, it will seem hard to beare the least wrong: but flesh is not a friend, whom we may safely consult; but rather a bo-some enemy, whom wee ought to resist: if we ask counsel of CHRIST (whose counsell we ought, and may most safely follow) hee will bid us goe and be reconciled: and St. Paul bids us to feed our enemies, and to overcome evill with good, Rom. 11. 21. and Solomon can tell us, that it is the glory of a man to passe over a transgression, Prov. 19. 11. As for Revenge, it is not for us to meddle with it; because the Lord himself saith, Dent. 32. 35. *To me belongeth vengeance*

grance and recompence : and St. James will assure us, that to have bitter envying and strife in the heart, is wisdom which descendeth not from above; but is earthly, sensuall, devillish: but that wisdom which is from above, is easie to be intreated, and full of mercy, James 3. 17. Wherefore let us grieve at such wrathfull motions, assuring our selves that it is a point of heavenly wisdom to forbear; and certainly if wee can but once finde that God hath wrought in us a readiness to forgive those which have wronged us, and to pray for their conversion, we may esteem it an evident signe of Sanctification.

As for the time to come,
F 4 that

that we may the better preserve the bond of Charity, we must resolve carefully to observe these two sorts of rules. 1. How we may keep peace with others. 2. How others may doe the like vvith us.

As for the first, because others may outwardly wrong us either in word or deed, that wee may in both avoyd discontent and strife thereupon, wee must propose unto our selves a twofold rule.

1. Concerning their words; which is the rule in *Solomon*, *Prov. 7. 21.* namely, *That we take no heed unto all words that are spoken:* for this is that, which often stirreth up strife amongst us, which otherwise might

might easily, and without any prejudice be avoyded, if men were not too inquisitive and ready to take notice of every thing that is spoken: and therefore we should here not entertain, but sleight, yea reject such men, who, under pretence of love unto us, will whisper in our eares, and maliciously informe us against such or such an one; whom *Solomon* calleth *pick-thanks, whisperers, tale-bearers, such as will separate chief friends*, Prov. 16. 28. for occasion of separation may be given (if so taken) between friends; as we often see that he, which is singularly affected to another, may hastily speake some reproachfull

words of him ; which perhaps he will presently be sorry for , and not speak the like again : yet this shall be enough for the breach of charity , if it be in the audience of a whisperer : who (to speak the truth) is a meer incendiary , that will ever be adding fuell to the fire of contention. Whence Saint James calls the tongue, *a fire, a world of iniquity, that setteth on fire the whole course of Nature*, Jam. 3. 6. And Solomon saith, that *without wood the fire is quenched ; and without a tale-bearer , strife ceaseth*, Prov. 26.20.

The second rule , whereby we may keep peace with others , is concerning other mens

mens actions: which is, that wee so take them (though sometimes wrongfull) that wee bee not easily provoked thereby; for an hasty and furious discontent upon some small occasion, doth often break out to the breach of Charity; whereas a seasonable deliberation would mitigate the matter, and so cover all in silence. And therefore Saint *Paul* tells us, that *Charity suffereth long, and is not easily provoked.* 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5. If we can but make true use of these two rules, wee may easily, for our parts, live at peace with others. Secondly, we must endeavour that others also by our carriage may doe the like with us: to which

which purpose we must take away, first a common fault amongst us, which is a main cause of strife and enmity: 2. the occasion thereof.

The fault it self is railing, scandalous, and reproachfull speaking: which is so frequent, that few or none (if we looke narrowly into our words) but are conscious unto themselves hereof; but so haynious in it self, that Saint *Paul* ranketh it with robbery and extortion, 1 *Cor.* 6. 10. saying that neither theeves. nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the Kingdom of God; and so pernicious also unto the sweet society of men; that it is that breath, which often blows the coales of contention so farre,

farre, that they cannot bee quenched againe without blood: and daily experience teacheth us, that there is no such common cause of strife and debate, as scandalous termes which are so often heard amongst us: so that, if we can but avoid these, wee shall take away the very ground upon which our wrongfull actions are builded; and therefore Saint James, beseeching us by the name of Brethren, exhorteth us not to speak evill one of another, Jam. 4.11. and Saint Peters advice is, that wee lay aside all evill speakings, and as new born Babes desire the sincere Milk of the Word, 1 Pet. 2.1.

Now, that our speech of others

others may be such as it ought to be, let us follow the advice of *Solomon*, whose counsell is, that *is* be friendly: Prov. 18.24. *A man that hath friends ought to shew himself friendly, not uttering any thing that may tend to their disgrace; lest, by such discourtesies, he lose their good liking, but rather endeavour by faire, and courteous speeches, to knit their hearts faster unto him.*

Neither yet can wee easily avoyd this fault, unless in the second place wee take away the occasion of it; which is a tickling desire, that most men are affected with, to hear the faults of other men (though perhaps less than their own)

layd

layd open and spoken against :
which quickly begetteth a
suspicion of their worth, and
hereupon we too too readily
build some calumnious report
or other. If it shall therefore
happen at any time, that we
hear the slips and errours of
another, let us not be delight-
ed therein, but rather seek
to cover them; for *hee that*
covereth a fault, seeketh love,
Prov. 17.9. and not he which
desireth to have them layd
open. This is that which we
ought to doe, both for the re-
storing and preserving of
Charity; wherein wee must
necessarily examine our selves
before wee come to par-
take with others at the Lords
Table. If upon examination
we

we finde any thing wanting, either that we are not in charity with others, or others with us; let us according to these rules seek by all means to make good what is wanting, and so come.

CHAP. X.
*Of Premeditation and
Prayer.*

THus of the first thing to be perform'd in our preparation, namely Examination of our own fittesse to receive. The second is the Premeditation of the benefits, which wee are to receive: which we must not omit, that we may the better be stirred
up

up to seek God, and to communicate at his Table with joy and gladnesse: for there is nothing which makes us more cold and backward in such duties, than this, that we have not sufficiently tasted how good the Lord is to those which seek him; the consideration whereof is alone able to move any man to a longing desire after him. Wherefore, having searched into our own estate by a second examination, lest we should yet fall back to a lukewarme carelesnes of what we are to doe, (to which the Devil will bee ever ready to tempt us) and so become the more unfit to communicate at the Lords Table, either to
ould
Gods

Gods glory or our own comfort, let us ever quicken our devotion with a seasonable premeditation before wee come; of the benefits which wee are to receive by coming. All which are comprehended in this one word Life, which we receive in the Lords Supper, by receiving Christ, who is *Life it self*, John 14. 6.

Now the life of a Christian is either the life of Grace here, or Glory hereafter.

The life of Grace (which we obtaine in this Supper) consists of two things.

1. A happy freedome from a twofold evill: First, of sin; from which we are freed by the death of Christ: whose blood

bloud (if we rely on him) will make our sins (though as red as scarlet) to become as white as wooll.

1. Of punishment; from which Christ hath redeemed us by the shedding of his blood; so that *there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8. 1.* whence we may boldly say, *who is hee that condemneth? it is Christ that died; yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God making intercession for us, ver. 34.*

The second thing is a comfortable enjoyment of a three-fold good:

1. An inseparable union both with Christ our head, from whom nothing shall be able

to separate us, Rom. 8.38. as also with our brethren and fellow-members in Love and Charity; which *David* accounted *A good and joyfull thing*, Psal. 133.1.

2. A blessed strengthening of our faith, whereof this Sacrament is a sure seale (as before) whence it shall come to passe, that we shall be able to resist the temptations of the Devill, (who striveth by all meanes to make shipwrack of our faith and us) and reply with *David*, Ps. 16. 9. *I have set God alwaies before me, for he is on my right hand; therefore shall I not fall: this is that which will make our hearts glad, and our flesh to rest in hope: as it is verse 10. which*
bring-

bringeth in a third good, and that not the least, that God vouchsafeth to his people in this world, namely, Peace of conscience.

This is that which we are most carefully to seeke after, and which in the latter end, will be more orth unto us, than tenne thousand worlds of pleasure which we can enjoy: and therefore *Dauids* counsell is, *Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right, for that shall bring a man peace at the last, Psal. 37.*

38. Now wherein can wee better keep innocency, than by being carefully and faithfully exercised in Gods service? And what greater comfort of heart, and what greater

ter

ter peace of conscience can redound to a poor sinfull soul, than the full assurance of the forgiveness of his sins, and his inseparable union with Christ Jesus? which we receive, if we receive aright, by receiving the Sacrament. This is that, besides which there is nothing in us which shall be able to strengthen and comfort us against our Enemy the Devil, in the day of our departure hence; who will then be sure to affright us with the ugliness of our finnes (though now in policy hee cover them) that so he may, if it be possible, drive us to despaire of Gods mercy towards us: then (I say) by the help of a
good

Good conscience, as *Samuel* resolutely spake unto the *Israelites*, *1 Sam. 12.3.* saying, *Behold, here I am; witness against me, before the Lord, and before his anointed; whose Oxe have I taken? whom have I defrauded? and I will restore it you: so shall wee be able to* non-plus our calumniating enemy, and say; *Behold, Satan, here I am, witness against me before the Lord; wherein have I done those evil things which I should not have done? wherein have I omitted those good duties which I should have done? when did I at any time despise of Gods mercy, or neglect the same? when did I prophane, or abuse his holy Sabbaths?*

Sabbaths ? When did I con-
temn or neglect his word and
Sacraments ? here I am ; wit-
nesse against me : but my con-
science tells me to my com-
fort , that I have diligently,
according to my power , per-
formed what I ought , and
therefore thou hast no part in
me. If wee can thus clear our
selves, then shall we bee able
to say with *St. Paul.* 2 Tim. 4.
7, 8. *The time of my departure
is at hand, I have fought a good
fight , I have finished my course,
I have kept the faith :* and that
which followeth hereupon,
is, *Henceforth is laid up for me
a Crown of Righteousnes.* This
Crown is that benefit , which
we shall receive, after this life
of grace is ended , in the life
of

of glory. In the meane time, while we live here, we shall receive, though not this Crown actually, yet the full assurance thereof, believing with S. Paul, that it is laid up for us, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give us at the last day.

These are the benefits, which every true Communicant receiveth at the Lords Table: wherefore (as we desire to receive these benefits, which passe all understanding) let us carefully meditate thereon, that we may be inflamed with the desire of them.

But (because all that wee can doe, is nothing without Gods blessing) we are in the

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next

next place to pray to God, that he will be pleased to blesse our endeavours, and to accept us in his So ne; which is the third duty required of us in our Preparation: without the due performance of which, though otherwise we have diligently prepared our selves, we cannot expect to receive any comfort of soule with the Bread and Wine; because God onely giveth that unto us, and he is debter unto no man: let us, therefore seek unto him by prayer for a blessing, who is the giver of all blessings. This we ought to doe first in private, setting aside some convenient times, wherein we may freely betake our selves to this duty: but

but especially in the morning, when we are to receive, we should rise early & consider what we are to doe that day, namely, sit at the Lords Table, and therefore be sure that we consecrate our selves to God by prayer and good meditations. Secondly in publique with the Congregation; where we ought to present our selves at the very beginning, that so we may joyne together in all things which we are to performe, and there at our first entrance pour forth unto God (as at all other times) this, or the like Prayer.

*O Lord strengthen me against
the temptations of Satan who
striveth to draw away my heart
from*

from thee; and accept the prayers which I shall now make unto thee through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Which done, joyne with the Congregation in such prayers as are then used.

In both we are carefully to consider two things.

1. For whom we ought to pray; and that is, not for our selves onely, but others also, according to the Counsell of *S. James, chap. 4. v. 16. Pray one for another*, which wee learne from the patterne of prayer, the Lords prayer, left unto us by Christ himself.

2. How we ought to pray; and that is, first in humility, with a feeling of our owne wants, for which the poore

Publi-

Publican was rather justified than the proud Pharisee for his vaine boasting, *Luke 18. 14.* Secondly, in a settled and fervent devotion: when we pray, our mindes ought not to be fixed on any thing else, (as many, God knowes, are) for God will have the whole heart or none. 3. In faith; with confidence that we shall receive what we aske; for *he, which wavereth, that is, not believeth, Let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord, James 1. 7.* If we be deficient in any one of these conditions, wee aske amisse, and so shall receive accordingly. Wherefore, as we desire to receive benefit, and comfort

by the Lords Supper., let us seek unto God for it : and as we hope to have our prayers heard ; let us pray both for our selves and others in true humility, fervency, and devotion, and assured hope of obtaining.

C H A P. XI.

*Of Meditation at the
Lords Table.*

HAVING thus fitted our selves by examination of our estate, premeditation of the benefits, and prayer for a blessing, we may assure our selves that we have prepared our selves for the receiving of the Holy Communion, (though

(though by reason of our
weaknesse, not in that mea-
sure, yet) in that right man-
ner as we ought: and so have
performed the first duty re-
quired of us, namely, dili-
gent preparation; whereupon
wee may boldly and cheere-
fully (otherwise not) present
our selves unto the Lords
Table: where we are to bee
exercised in a second duty,
namely, a seasonable Medita-
tion.

This Meditation must bee
threefold. 1. Before. 2, In
the time of the Consecration.
3. After the same, or, in the
time of Receiving.

Before the Consecration,
when the Minister is going
towards the Table, Meditate

on these 2 things. 1. Seing the Table spread, and the Elements set thereon, we are to consider; what place wee are come unto; namely, the Table of the great King of Heaven and Earth: and that therefore wee ought most carefully and reverently, to behave our selves, both in body by a reverent and seemly gesture: and also in minde, laying aside all earthly cogitations whatsoever, and that in a twofold respect. 1. Because the place it selfe is holy, and therefore ought not to be profaned by any unseemly behaviour; for these must be laid aside, as God commanded, *Exod. 3. 5. Put off thy shooes from off thy feet,*

feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. 2. Because as the place is holy, so also God himself is there amongst us, as he saith, *Mat. 18. 20. Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* He is in the midst of us beholding not onely our outward gesture, but our very hearts and affections; and ready both to reward those that honour him by reverencing, and to punish all such as dishonour him by profaning and abusing his holy ordinance: which we shall doe if our carriage be not with fear and reverence.

2. When wee hear the Minister say, *draw near and*

G 5

take

take this Sacrament ; we must consider that God by his Minister freely inviteth us to his Table : then let every one lift up his heart by this or the like ejaculation.

Lord I am not worthy , by reason of my sins , to approach before thee ; but seeing it hath pleased thee in mercy to call me, behold , in humility and obedience I come.

Then joyn in prayer with the Minister. In the time of the Consecration wee ought seriously to settle our mindes on the Elements , and the Actions about them , for the better stirring up of our devotion : and so meditate thus. When we hear the Minister read the words of Christs

In-

Institution, and see him take the Bread and Wine; wee ought joyfully and thankfully to meditate on the great love of God, in setting a part his Son for the redemption of us his enemies; in the taking of these Elements, and setting them apart to bee distributed unto us, as seals and pledges of the same: joyfully (I say) in respect of the benefit, which doth thereby come unto us, and thankfully in respect of Gods love, which is greater than all the hearts of men joyn'd in one are able to expresse.

2. When we see the Bread broken, and the Wine poured out, we ought to be exercised in a twofold Meditation.

I. Of

1. Of comfort ; considering that the Bread is broken, and the Wine poured out , not only to be the more divisible to the Communicants , but chiefly to represent unto us the crucifying of Christs Body , and the shedding of his Bloud for our finnes : for *hee was broken for iniquities , Isai. 53. 5.* By which is not meant that any bone of him was broken, but that he was crucified : whence we should every one of us gather this comfort, saying to our souls: *Christ Jesus was broken on the Crosse, and suffered an accursed death for me , by whose merits , I trust , I shall escape the curse of that death, which is due for my sins unto me.* And here by the way

way we may take notice how the Papists doe erre in delivering whole cakes unto the Communicants, which represent Christ whole, not crucified, & so afford the lesse comfort.

2. Of sorrow, and that for our finnes; the grievousnesse of which was such that they could not bee satisfied for, without the pretious Bloud of *Christ Iesus*: these were the spears that pierced him to the Soul; that was that which drew his pretious blood from his side: and the consideration of this should breed in us a hearty sorrow, that we, so vile wretches as wee are, should thus wound so loving a Redeemer: and certainly if we doe
not

not grieve for those sins, for which he hath so much smarted, we may justly fear that the stupid Earth, the hard rockes, and the darke graves, which trembled, rent, and opened at his death, shall one day rise up in judgement against us & condemne us. When therefore we see the Bread broken, &c. Let every one thus meditate; *O vile wretch that I am, that I by my sins should thus wound my mercifull and loving Redeemer!*

After the Consecration, when the Minister is receiving, himself (considering that we are in the presence of God, who seeth our very hearts) we should pour out our souls unto him in this or the like soliloquie. O.

O Sweet Iesu, I doe humbly acknowledge with the Centurion that I am not worthy, that thou shouldest enter under my roof, much lesse to come and sup and dwell with me: but seeing it is thy good pleasure to vouchsafe me this favour, cleanse me, I beseech thee, from my sins that I may entertain thee in a pure and sanctified heart, strengthen my faith that I may fully rely on thy mercy, comfort me with thy blessed spirit and so dwell with me for ever. Grant this, O blessed Redeemer, for thy mercies sake, A M E N.

Again, before we receive when the Minister is coming to distribute, and offers the Elements unto us (considering that Christ with all his

his benefits is offered unto us by God, as well as the Elements by the Minister) let every one meditate thus with himselfe: *Christ with the benefits of his death doth now come to sanctifie and comfort my sinfull soul, in full assurance whereof I am to receive these signes and scales at the hand of his Minister*; And so as hee stretcheth out his hand to receive these, let him lift up his soul in faith with this or the like ejaculation. *Come Lord Jesus unto thy humble servant, as my trust is thou wilt.* This we are to doe after the Consecration, before we receive.

After this in the act of receiving wee are to performe these two things.

1. While

1. While we eat the Bread,
meditate every one thus.

Blessed Jesu, I doe heartily
believe that thou wast crucified
on the Crosse, and that for me
as well as for any other, and, as
I have now received this Bread
broken, whereby my Body shall
be nourished: so I believe that
I have also received spiritual-
ly thy Body crucified with all
the benefis thereof; the full
pardon of all my sins; and the
strengthening and refreshing of
my sinfull soul; this I believe,
Lord, help my unbelief for thy
mercies sake. Amen.

2. When wee drink the
Wine, and while we feel it
in our stomack, wee should
thus meditate.

Most blessed Redeemer, I do
truely

truely believe that thy Blood
was shed out of thy Body, as
verily as I have received this
Wine apart from the Bread; and
that for the remission of my sins,
as well as any others: and I doe
also believe that with this
Wine I have received thy pre-
cious blood, whereby my sins are
fully washed away and my soul
purified: and that according to
thy promise, I shall never hun-
ger nor thirst any more because
with this Bread and Wine I have
receiv'd thy flesh, which is meat
indeed, and thy blood, which is
drink indeed; with which I hum-
bly pray thee to cherish and nour-
ish my poor soul, and to increase
in me hearty love to these my
fellow members, who have now
participated with me, that so

we

we may serve thee as we ought
and that nothing may be able to
separate us from thy love, which
I humbly beseech thee to grant
for thy mercies sake. Amen.

CHAP. XII.

Of Practise.

THIS is that, whereon we
ought to meditate in the
time of receiving; which
being duly performed, wee
ought in the next place to
take notice of a religious Pra-
ctice of those things, which
are to bee observed after-
wards in our life and conver-
sation.

These things may be redu-
ced to two heads: namely,
such

such as we are to do, 1. in the Church. 2. at home.

In the Church we must performe two duties.

1. Having ended the former meditations, wee ought each man in particular to give thanks unto God for his mercy, in this or the like forme.

O Lord, I humbly blesse thy holy name, for that thou hast in mercy vouchsafed to accept me at this thy Table amongst the rest of thy elect and chosen people, and that thou hast so graciously fed my languishing soule with the precious body and blood of Christ Iesus. I confesse, O Lord, that I am not worthy of the least of thy favours: but seeing it hath pleased thee thus to have

have mercy upon me ; give me grace, I humbly beseech thee, to walk worthy of this thy mercy in wannesse of life, to the glory of thy holy name, and the salvation of my sinfull soul ; even for thy mercies sake. Amen.

2. After this, every one ought to joyn with the Congregation in prayer & thanksgiving, praying God for his goodnesse, and so depart lovingly together with joyfull hearts, that God hath so graciously entertained us his unworthy servants.

After we are come home, we are further to take notice of two duties.

1. Meditation, meditating seriously what comfort wee have received by being at the

the Lords Table. Upon which consideration, if we finde any good motions in our selves, any assurance of the forgivenesse of our sins, wee ought by all meanes to cherish the same by the comfortable remembrance of Christs death and Passion for us; and so much the more lift up our thankfull hearts unto God for his mercy; as S. Paul sweetly exhorteth the Colossians, saying, as ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, abounding therein with thanksgiving, Col. 2. 6, 7. And this is that which Solomon maketh a true note of a righteous man, that he will ever

ever be increasing those good gifts, which he hath in him: when he saith, *Prov. 4. 18.* The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more & more unto perfect day. When therefore we shall find a little faith, a little love in us. (as God knowes, the best of us hath little enough) let us desire to increase it, and to have our corruptions diminished: for these desires are a beginning of Grace, and a sign of a heart well affected: and of this desire we cannot make a better triall, than by considering whether we long to receive againe the next time; that so these good beginnings may be the more perfected.

But

But if wee finde not this comfort in us : let us search into our selves, whether there be not some sinne in us as yet unrepented of, and whether we came not so well prepared to the Communion as we should, if so, then ought we to humble our selves before God, with sorrow for this our negligence : If wee cannot see this in us, but that we came well prepared; then must we patiently wait the Lords leisure, and pray earnestly that he will give us the comfort of his spirit, with full assurance that hee will grant our request when it shall be best for us.

The second duty, wherein we must be exercised at home

home, is a resolution or constant purpose of leading a new life, whereunto St. Paul earnestly inviteth us, *Rom. 6. 19.* saying, *As you have yeelded your members servants to uncleanness, and unto iniquity, even so now yeeld your members servants to righteousness, unto holynesse: and why? because being made free from sin, and become servants unto God, wee have our fruit (not unto sinne, but) unto holynesse, v. 12.* Shall wee then be made free from sin, and become the servants of G O D, and yet returne unto sinne again? G O D forbid: if we do so, we receive the grace of God in vaine: which Saint Paul be-

H seech-

seecheth the Corinthians to take heed of, 2 Cor.6.1. now what is it but to receive the Grace of God in vain, when after we have escaped the pollutions of this world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, wee are again imangled therewith; and, as the Sow to the mire, return to our former course of life again? S. Peter will assure us, that it had been better never to have known the way of righteousness, than, after we have known it to turn from the holy Commandement delivered unto us, 2 Pet.2.21. And well were it, if this were duly considered of some, who think it sufficient to live precisely

cisely that day, in which they receive (though perhaps they can scarce doe that) and presently afterwards live as prophanely and loosely as ever they did ; but we must know that God expects a daily reformation of those, which present themselves at his Table; and, if we doe not duly consider of it, wee shall one day with feare and trembling acknowledge it; as *S. Paul* plainly tells the Hebrews; saying, *If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certaine fearefull looking for of judgement and fiery indignation.* *Heb. 10. 26, 27.*

H 2

NOW

Now that we may the better lead a new life before God, wee must consider that to the direction of a Christian life, three things are to be known of us.

1. What wee are to pray for.
2. What we ought to believe.
3. What we are to doe.

The first being rightly known, affords us a perfect direction for our Hope: the second for our faith: the third for our Piety.

The first we have fully set down in the Lords Prayer, composed by Christ himself as a most exact rule for all our Prayers.

The

The. second in the Creed, which containeth the Articles of our Faith, contained in the Doctrine of the Apostles; called therefore the Apostles Creed.

The third in the Tenne Commandements, written by the finger of God himself, and revealed unto us in his holy Word, to be our direction both for our holinesse towards God, and our charity towards our neighbours.

These three rules of our life (the Lords Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandements) are daily repeated of those of the meane and more simple sort, but yet (God knowes) not so

well understood , as they should be, by divers to whom God hath given a greater measure of knowledge : never did our Land , yea almost every house , more freely abound with fruitfull & comfortable expositions upon these rules , than now they doe : yet who looks so farre into them , as to know thereby the full extent of any of them ? Some few indeed there are (whereof God increase the number) who make a conscionable use of those good meanes of Salvation : whereas others are well content, yea with delight desire to read (and that upon the best dayes) vain and idle discourses,

courses, which are so farre from furthering us in the way of Salvation, as that (like tares) they choak the Word of God, and hinder the growth thereof, as we too often see by our dayly experience. There is indeed a time for all things; for pleasure as well as profit: but shall we spend the best of our time, yea (as some doe most miserably) the greatest part of our time in such vanities, and altogether neglect those good helps for our direction; esteeming them too plain and homely, or not pleasant enough for our witty inventions, and acute judgments? Let such know, that they, which thus neglect
H 4 their

their own good, are guilty to themselves of a twofold crime.

1. Of unnaturall wrong unto their own soules, in stopping their eyes from beholding the light of salvation, which otherwise would shine unto them; dealing herein as injuriously with themselves, as Papists doe with their deceived Laity, training them up in ignorance and blind devotion.

2. Of a twofold ingratitude: 1, towards those painfull Authors, which (like fruitfull lights) have spent themselves for the directing of others, whose labours doe well deserve to bee accepted amongst

amongst us : and wee shall prove our selves but unthankfull members of the Church , wherein we live if wee make not that good use of those lights , for which they were intended.

Secondly , (which is the greatest) we shew our selves unthankfull towards G O D himself, who hath in mercy raised up such meanes for the helping of our infirmities ; whereof others , better deserving than our selves , have been destitute. Having therefore such helpes so freely offered unto us , let us (if we desire to live more righteously before God) use them more carefully than we have

H 5

done

done : endeavoring in the first place to know what is contained in each Petition of the Lords Prayer ; that so, when we pray , we may know what that is , for which wee pray ; and secondly , for our Faith, to know the full extent of every Article thereof; that so we may truly understand what that is , which wee confesse we believe : and because both of these are little available , except our piety bee such as it ought to bee, let us especially bee exercised in the Commandements of God ; that thereby wee may understand what wee are commanded , and what forbidden. These are the direct
courses

courses which every true-hearted Christian ought to take, and which will one day prove truly comfortable, when others, vain and frivolous, deceive us.

But because our Piety and Religious behaviour is the chiefest thing required on our part unto the leading of a new life, let us further see what rules wee may yet observe for the directing thereof.

This Piety of ours is seen in these two things. 1. Our Words. 2. Our Works and Actions.

As for our Words, wee should follow the counsell of Saint *Paul* to the Ephesians, which

which is, that wee avoyd in our talk all filthineſſe, all fooliſh talking and jeſtings which are not convenient. Ephes. 5.4. and hee giveth a very good reaſon for it. 1 Cor. 15.33. be-
cause evill communications corrupt good manners; and that oftentimes both in the ſpeaker and hearer. But ſome will ſay, what? muſt wee never uſe any pleaſant diſcourſes? no jeſting at all? yes, there is a time for that alſo; ſo it be according to the rule of Saint Peter, ſuch as God may thereby be glorified, 1 Pet. 4.11. other waies wee may not ſtir up our mindes we may to an honeſt chearfulneſſe by civill and modeſt jeſting; but
ob-

obscene and prophane, which Saint Paul calls filthiness, vain and idle, which hee termes foolish talking, and jesting, which is not convenient; such I say, ought not to bee once named amongst us as becometh Saints; for hereby both speaker and hearer are often stirred up to loose and vaine gestures, or at leastwise to conceive and think of them, and so Gods name is much dishonoured. Miserable it is to observe how frequently such speeches doe passe for currant under the assumed titles of merry discourses: but let us remember what our Saviour Christ hath said, *Matt. 12. 36, 37.* that by our words we

we shall be justified, and by our words we shall be condemned, and that every idle word which we shall speak, we shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment: Must we give an account of our words, and shall we not then be carefull of them? Must we answer for every idle word, and shall we fill up our discourses with blasphemies, with obscene and scurrilous jestings? if we must give an account of them, certainly these will lye heavy upon us: Wherefore let us rather with David set a watch before our mouth, and bridle up our lips, that we offend not with our tongue: let us be carefull that our words be
such

such, as *Solomon* commendeth *Prov. 25. 11.* *Filthy spoken*, which are like apples of gold in pictures of silver; that is, such words, as containe whole-some matter, and are spoken in a comely and decent manner, are as acceptable and pleasant to the eare of a judicious hearer, as silver pictures, adorned with golden apples, are unto the eye of the beholder.

For our Works, we must, as *S. Paul* counselleth walk as children of the light, ever proving what is acceptable unto the Lord, *Eph. 5. 8, 10.* Having our conversation honest among men, that they seeing our good works, may glorify God thereby.

How

How to direct both our Words and Actions aright, wee must chiefly observe these two things. 1. How to avoid that which is evill in both. 2. How to seeke and obtaine that which is good.

To avoide that which is evill, four rules are especially to be observed.

The first concernes the beginnings of evill; namely, that wee watch and pray, according to our Saviours counsell and practice, *Matt. 26.*

41. Lest we enter into temptation, and so be drawne away to sinne against God; for of our selves we are prone therunto, and unable to avoid it: and if it go so far that we be

once

once tempted to sin, and feele
in us any motion thereunto,
wee should endeavour to re-
sist this temptation in the be-
ginning, and reason thus with
our selves; Did not I lately
receive the Sacrament of the
Lords Supper, where I had
a full pardon of all my finnes
(past) sealed unto me, and
where I vowed and promised
to lead a new life before God,
how then can I do this thing,
and breake my promise with
God? I have put off my
coat of sinne, and therefore I
may not (I will not) put it on
again: thus ought we to re-
sist temptations at the first,
lest they get the dominion o-
ver us.

The

The second rule concernes the occasion of evill, which we must necessarily avoid, if we desire to avoyd the evill it self.

The occasions are divers, but especially these two.

1. Idleneffe, from which proceed many (and these fometimes haynous and crying) finnes; which the Son of *Syrach* calleth therefore the teacher of much evill, Ecclesi. 33. 27. To avoyd this, we must bee carefull to employ our selves diligently in that vocation wherein God hath placed us; for otherwise the Devill will be sure to take an occasion to tempt even the best of us; as we see in *David*, who

who was a man after Gods
owne heart; and yet, when
he was walking on the roofo
of his house (while *Ioab* and
the rest were in the battle) he
was tempted to commit a-
dultery with *Bathsheba* the
wife of *Uriah*, 2 Sam. II. 2.
And how many doe we daily
see drawn away to lascivious-
nesse, drunkennesse, and such
like vices by this occasion?
Let us therefore carefully ex-
ercise our selves in our Voca-
tion, that the Divell may not
have an opportunity to set
upon us.

2. Bad Company, than
which nothing almost is
more forceable to drawe us
away to that which is evill?

Let

Let Joseph but live in Pharaohs Court, and he shall soon learne to sweare by the life of Pharaoh, Gen. 42. 15. and if Israel abide in Shittim, the people will soon commit whoredome with the daughters of Moab, Num. 25. 1. wherefore God commandeth his people to go out of Babylon, lest they bee partakers of her sin, Rev. 18. 4. And often are wee partakers of other mens sins, by frequenting their society; yea, (which is miserable to observe) diverse of ingenuous disposition and civill behaviour, have by degrees bin drawne away to loosenesse and riot, by associating themselves unfortunately with

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vaine and dissolute persons. And wee may herein observe the policy of our enemy the Diuel; who, when he findeth any man well disposed of himself, and not ready to yeeld to others temptations, will beset him (if he can possibly) with this snare, that so he may either by the wicked persuasions or bad examples of others, steale away his heart, and allure him to that which is evill, which should bee a forceable Caveat unto us, to make us heedfull what company wee fall into, and with whom we acquaint our selves, if we have any care of our soules: seasonable is the counsell of *Solomon* herein, who

who adviseth us, 1. Concerning the examples of others not to conforme our selves unto them *by walking in their wayes, but to avoid and pass away, Prov. 4. 15.* 2. Concerning their allurements, by no meanes to harken unto them; *if sinners intice thee, consent thou not, Prov. 1. 10.* If they say, come let us take our pleasure in this or that sort, let us goe to such a place, where wee may freely doe what we will: *If they thus draw thee, walk not in the way with them, refraine thy feet from their paths.* 3. As for familiarity with others, he adviseth us to *make no friends with an angry man, and with a* furious

furious man not to goe. Why?
lest thou learn his way, and get
a snare unto thy soul. Prov. 22.
24. 25. Wilt thou avoyd
Gaming, Swearing, &c. then
shun that company wherein
those vices are practised, or
else thou wilt rather encrease
them in thee. But some will
say, such an one is my fami-
liar friend, and shall I leave
him? that will bee taken un-
kindly; shall I get my selfe
discredit, where I may avoyd
it? Yes, be he never so neare
unto thee, yet if hee in his
courses forsake God, forsake
thou him, lest God forsake
thee: yea thou mayst therein
shew thy selfe a very friend
to him, in-winning him from
his

his evill waies by thy forsaking of him ; for so saith Saint Paul, 2 Thes. 3. 14. *If any man obey not our word, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed:* It may be when he seeth thee leave him, he will begin to think of his bad life, and so be ashamed of it, and by degrees leave it; therefore leave bad company for their sakes also, as well as thine own.

The third rule is, how we may restrain our selves when wee are about to undertake any sinfull action: and that is, by setting before our eyes this Caveat, *God sees: for his eyes are over all*, Prov. 15. 3. and therefore whatsoever we doe,
we

wee should consider that wee doe it in his presence: which, being conscionably considered, cannot but breed in us both reverence and watchfulnesse; reverence in respect of his Majesty; watchfulnesse in respect of his all-seeing Eye, that we offend him not, who will espy in us the least fault, be it never so secretly kept from the world.

Againe, consider how mercifull God hath ever been unto thee, in delivering thee from this or that danger, from this or that sin, wherinto thou must necessarily have fallen, if he had not upheld thee; and then answer
I the

the Devil when he tempteth thee, as Joseph did his wicked Mittris; how can I doe this wickednesse, and sin against my God? God hath been thus and thus mercifull unto me, and shall I yet offend him and provoke him to anger? God forbid.

The fourth rule is for our direction, when we are fallen into any sinne; which is this. When we are overtaken with any sin (as who is not every day?) wee should presently lament it, and not suffer it to goe on any farther, lest it come to a custome, and so stick fast in us: this is a difference which Solomon putteth between the righteous and the

the wicked. Prov. 24. 16. A
just man (saith he) falleth se-
ven times and riseth up again,
but the wicked shall fall into
mischiefe: the just man, though
he fall into any sinne, riseth
again by repentance; but the
wicked sinketh deeper down,
even to the pit of destruc-
tion.

These are the chiefest rules
to be observed for the avoy-
ding of that which is evil.

The next thing, which wee
must look into, is, how wee
may obtaine that which is
good: Here wee must princi-
pally observe these two
things: 1. make use of all oc-
casions thereunto: 2. make
conscience of every good
duty.

duty. As for the first, wee must first, according to the example of St. Paul, Phil. 3. 14. *use all diligence that we may preß on towards the mark*, still endeavouring to bee better: and when we finde our selves deficient in the performance of any good duty (as G. O. D. knows wee are in all) wee should doe the same againe, and endeavour to performe it more fervently; that so we may come to a greater measure of goodnesse. Again, wee should gladly embrace the company of good men, that by their example and advise wee may be brought to a sense and feeling of those sinnes which wee commit; counting

counting it a great blessing of God, if thereby wee at any time be cross'd in those sins, to which wee are most addicted, as gaming, &c. and ever esteeme best of that company, not where our eares may be filled with prophane jestings, or tickled with superfluous conceits; but where our corruptions may be most roundly reprov'd; esteeming them our best friends, that will most plainly and faithfully put us in mind of our errours; which is the counsell of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians; *I beseech you* (saith he, *1 Thess. 5. 12, 13.*) *to know them which labour amongst you, and are over you in*

The Lord and admonish you; and
 to esteem them very highly in
 love for their workes sake:
 which may be our direction
 for esteeming both of our fa-
 miliar friends, and of our tea-
 chers; both which (if faith-
 full) labour for our good in
 the Lord by admonishing us;
 and both thereby deserve
 from us a true regard as a re-
 compence of this their love:
 therefore if any man desire to
 be furthered in good duties,
 let him testifie it by loving
 such men.

2. If wee desire to obtaine
 that which is good, we must
 be carefull that we make con-
 science (as of avoyding every
 evill)

evil) so of doing every good
duty, be it never so little; en-
davouring with Saint Paul to
have alwaies a conscience void
of offence towards God and men:
Acts 24.16. and labouring to
keep not onely some, but all
Gods Commandements, I ac-
cording to Davids wish, Psal.
119.3, 6. O that my waies were
made so direct, that I might
keep thy Statutes, so shall I not
be confounded, while I have re-
spect to all thy Commandements:
Let us not deceive our selves
in thinking it sufficient, that
we observe the Sabbath, and
that wee offend not God by
swearing, stealing, or such
like hainous offences; and yet
in the meane time make no
conscience

conscience of a lye for our commodity, or of vaine and idle discourses for delight, for, if wee thus doe, it is certainly an argument of a bad heart.

But some perhaps will say, If I thus endeavour to carry my self in all things, if I now and then doe not give a little way, I shall be accounted too precise and curious in matters which I need not. Be it so; yet bee willing to undergoe that censure; and esteeme it safer to offend ungodly men by thy good life, than a righteous God by thy bad life: and though others account it too much precisenesse, yet doe thou not so:
but

but rather consider that God
commandeth us to keep his
Precepts diligently, Psal. 119.

4. If diligently, then certainly
there is nothing in his pre-
cepts superfluous; nothing,
which wee may doe or not
doe, but every one, though of
never so small a matter, is to
be performed of us: whoso-
ever therefore shall endeavour
to his power to keep the
Commandements of God in
every thing, is so farre from
being too precise, that he doth
but what he is commanded.

To these Rules, for avoy-
ding of evill, and seeking of
good, wee may adde one
more, as the rule of all the

I 5

rest,

rest, and of our whole life :
and that is the Word of God;
which alone is able to direct
us in the way to salvation , as
David testifieth, *Psal.* 119.9.
*Wherewith shall a young man
cleanse his way? even by ruling
himself after thy Word:* Where-
fore let us carefully reade,
meditate, and conferre about
this VVord , and that often;
accounting (as well wee may)
every day lost, wherein we
learne not something out of
it ; ever desiring more and
more to be instructed there-
in, and account it a great bles-
sing of God, that we have the
use of it so freely to direct us
in the way of salvation. Nei-
ther let any man thinke him-
self

self so learned, that he needeth no farther instruction; for the best of us comes short of *David*, and yet he prayed still to be instructed in the Word of the Lord; as wee may see throughout the 119. *Psalm*. Again, if we did know more than wee doe, yet we are dull in the performance of what we know; and therefore we have need to read the same againe and againe, to stirre us up to a daily practice hereof: But that wee may so use the Word of God, as that it may be unto us the savour of life unto life; let us at all times, when wee are about to reade it, lift up our hearts to GOD by prayer, that hee may give

a blessing to our endeavours, without which whatsoever we doe in this, or any other thing, it will be so farre from being profitable unto us, as that it will rather prove our ruine in the end.

He, which shall thus set his heart to serve the Lord by denying ungodlynests and worldly lusts, by living honestly, righteously and soberly in this present world; he, which shall thus carefully receive the Sacrament in a right manner, and hear the Word with diligence, devoting himself to God by prayer in all things, which he doth; he which shall thus make conscience of his waies in every thing; the blessing of
God

God rest upon him, as it needs
must ; and that peace of con-
science , which no man know-
eth but he that enjoyes , ever
attend him here, and e-
verlasting peace, and
happinesse crown
him hereafter.

Amen.

THE

bod well upon him as it needs
 must; and the grace of con-
 science; which is not a pro-
 fit to be in the eyes of men
 and not in the heart; and
 the grace of love and
 the grace of hope
 the grace of faith



THE



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